# MEMOIRS

OF A

# COQUET.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

# MEMOIRS
OF A
# COQUET;
OR THE
## Hiſtory of Miſs HARRIOT AIRY.

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*By the AUTHOR of*

*EMILY WILLIS;*

*OR, THE*

*HISTORY of a NATURAL DAUGHTER.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

# PREFACE.

FOR the inſtruction of thoſe females who ſpend more time in dreſſing their heads, than in adorning their minds, and who take more pains to be admired than eſteemed, the following memoirs are publiſhed, with the conſent of her who furniſhed the editor with the moſt intereſting parts in them:

them: and as one ſtriking example is univerſally allowed to be more forcible (ſuch is the perverſity of human nature) than a thouſand precepts, he hopes that the character of Miſs *Harriot Airy*, will make every coquet in the kingdom reflect, ſeriouſly, on the folly of her conduct, and determine, as ſeriouſly, to amend it.

MEMOIRS

# MEMOIRS
## OF
# A COQUET.

## BOOK I.

TO three parts of the fair ſex, the love of admiration has been a fatal paſſion: it is a frivolous one at beſt:—it always throws a woman into trifling, and very often into trying ſituations, from which, if ſhe eſcapes with her virtue, ſhe has better luck than ſhe ought to expect: but when ſhe goes ſo

far as to endanger her virtue, ſhe hardly ever eſcapes with that purity of character on which every woman ſhould ſet the higheſt value. If ſhe is ſatisfied with her own prudence, ſhe will not find the world ſo well convinced of it: and the cenſures of the world every woman ſhould endeavour to avoid by the integrity of her conduct, and the conſiſtency of her behaviour. She who, by her indiſcretions, though without any criminal deſigns, affords the world hints for ſuſpicion, ſhould not be ſurpriſed, if thoſe hints are improved to her diſadvantage.

—back-wounding calumny
The *whiteſt* virtue ſtrikes;

and if *that* cannot eſcape, how doubly cautious ought a woman to be of her reputation!

*Harriot Airy*, the heroine of the following ſheets, at the age when girls are generally taken up with their dolls, diſcovered

covered a ſtronger propenſity to amuſe herſelf with *living*, than with *inanimate play-things*. She had ſeveral intrigues before ſhe was out of her hanging-ſleeves, and was thoroughly verſed in all the myſteries of *jiltiſm*, if I may venture to uſe the word, before ſhe entered into her teens.

*Harriot*, though not a *C*——, had many charms which do as much, if not more, execution on our ſex, than mere beauty. *That* may pleaſe the *eye*, but a woman muſt be poſſeſſed of ſomething ſtill more attracting, to win the *heart*. She was handſome and well-made; but what rendered her univerſally admired by thoſe who ſaw her, and who converſed with her, was a ſpeaking countenance, and a ſprightly diſpoſition. In the management of her eyes ſhe was a *P*——.

As ſhe was ſmart and ſenſible, a lively and good-humoured companion, ſhe was the darling of her parents, who ruined

her, by letting her conſtantly have her own way on every occaſion, and never attempting to croſs her wildeſt whims and moſt fanciful freaks. Blind to her bad qualities, becauſe too fond of her good ones, they ſuffered her mind to be, like a neglected garden, disfigured with the moſt noxious weeds. All the education ſhe had was of a trifling kind. It was the *ſhell* only they ſtudied, with diligence, to poliſh: the inward *gem* they totally diſregarded. They made her conceited and fantaſtical, by the injudicious praiſes beſtowed on her to her face, and ſpoilt her for a woman, by making her believe ſhe was a Goddeſs. They kept a great deal of polite company, to which *Harriot* was always exhibited to the beſt advantage, in order to entertain them—ſhe pleaſed every body; for there was ſomething in her addreſs irreſiſtibly attracting.

And here I cannot help reflecting a little on the abſurd behaviour of parents

in

in the education of their children—of their daughters in particular. To make them agreeable in their perſons, and ſhowy figures in the eye of the world, is their principal purpoſe.—The accompliſhments they beſtow on them tend to make them coquets—for, with ſuch accompliſhments, they are naturally filled with a ſtrong deſire to diſplay them; and the flattering ſpeeches which they receive on a public diſplay of them, before they are out of their teens, are ſufficient to ſpoil them for wives and mothers.—To a frivolous education, and to boarding-ſchool accompliſhments and connections, the preſent numerous race of coquets are owing.—And till parents ſtudy more to embelliſh the minds, than to adorn the perſons of their daughters, they cannot wonder that ſo few are fit for a domeſtic life.—If a girl has beauty, ſhe is in a very fair way to have her head turned; for no care, no coſt is ſpared, to ſet that

beauty in the moſt flattering light: and thoſe who have made any obſervations on the girls of the age, will confeſs with me, that the admiration of their perſons is the ſureſt key to their boſoms.—For this kind of adulation the oldeſt, and the moſt deformed, have as ſtrong a reliſh as the young and the charming.—But theſe are remarks too trite, and therefore I will trouble the reader with no more of them.

At *ſeventeen* ſhe endeavoured to make an impreſſion on the heart of Capt. *Pike*, a young officer, who viſited the family. His ſiſters, for he had two, were her intimates. By their means ſhe had more frequent opportunities to execute her deſigns, than ſhe could have had without them. He was pre-engaged to another woman, and therefore a more ſtriking object. A coquet never is anxious to make a conqueſt for the ſake of the man; her chief intention is to prevent his being conquered by a rival. It is

that

that motive, though a very baſe one, which animates her to diſplay her charms. The whole buſineſs, the ſupreme delight of her life, is to interrupt the felicity of others.

This ardent deſire, however, to interrupt the felicity of others, does not always proceed from a malevolent diſpoſition: The coquet is more prompted by the pleaſure of diſappointing, than diſtreſſing a rival in beauty or wit, and of mortifying her vanity, more than diſturbing her peace.——The firmeſt female friendſhips have been broke by the introduction of a lover to one of them, who was thoroughly indifferent to them both, when conſidered only in the light of a common acquaintance. Then it is that the coquet begins to appear in her true colours. Envy and jealouſy are the principal ingredients in her compoſition.—What infernal ingredients! But ſhe often meets with the puniſhment ſhe deſerves;

for ſhe is often caught in her own toils.

This was *Harriot's* caſe. A plot which ſhe had formed for the conqueſt of *Pike's* heart, more firmly attached it to the only woman in the world from whom ſhe wiſhed to allure him.

*Pike* was very agreeable in his perſon, amiable in his manners, and, in every reſpect, an honour to his profeſſion. He was genteel, and had a winning addreſs. Strong, but not clumſy; full of fire, but not quarrelſome; quick to reſent an injury, but ready to forgive it. He was courageous, not brutally intrepid, and polite, without being ſlaviſhly ſupple. With a great deal of good ſenſe, he had alſo a great deal of learning, and made as good a figure with the point of his pen, as with the point of his ſword. He was good-natured in the beſt manner; that is, more from principle than conſtitution. The *firſt* kind of good-nature is a noble qua-

lity,

lity, and animates a man to perform the moſt laudable actions; but the *laſt* frequently urges him to commit a thouſand ridiculous ones, and makes him the jeſt of wit, and the dupe of cunning. *Pike* had, in ſhort, all the exalted accompliſhments of his own, and all the attractive qualities of the ſofter ſex; and was at once honoured and eſteemed, reſpected and beloved, by every body who was acquainted with him.—When he moved, there was a manly grace in every geſture: and, when he ſpoke, the ears of thoſe who heard him, were charmed to attention; ſo muſical was his voice, and ſo intereſting his converſation.

*Lucy Aimwell* had all the perſonal charms, and all the intellectual accompliſhments which can make a woman lovely—She had bright talents, but never diſplayed them with oſtentation. Every body attended to her with ſatisfaction, becauſe ſhe converſed with a diſpoſition rather

ther to *pleaſe* than to *ſhine*; and becauſe ſhe delivered her ſentiments on every ſubject without an affected air, or a poſitive tone: by which many very ſenſible people, of both ſexes, are apt to leſſen, while they are endeavouring to increaſe, their conſequence.

To aim at ſhining in company, is generally to expoſe ourſelves to contempt. And thoſe who are moſt qualified for making a bright figure in converſation, are apt to give more diſguſt than ſatisfaction, by engroſſing it.—Very few have talents for ſhining, but every body may give pleaſure, for that will always be given by not offending, and by always appearing to be pleaſed.

*Pike* was always entertained with *Harriot's* converſation, but never looked upon her with the eyes of a lover. He regarded her as the friend of his ſiſters, and the friend of his *Lucy*, and liked well enough to ſay all the civil things which politeneſs naturally

naturally dictates—no more. He never gave her the leaſt reaſon to ſuppoſe, that ſhe had charms ſufficiently alluring to weaken his attachment to the miſtreſs of his affections.

He thought her very agreeable, and was pleaſed with her chatty humour, her freedom, ſprightlineſs, and eaſe; but he had not the leaſt idea of her in any other way, than as the companion of a leiſure hour—Her manners did not ſeem to him in the leaſt calculated to make her appear to advantage in the character of a wife; and all the airs ſhe aſſumed to draw off his attention from his favourite object, only ſerved to make that object more amiable in his eyes.—He ſaw through all her little artifices, and gave no encouragement to them.—He ſaw the coquet ſo ſtrongly marked in every look, word, and geſture, that his *Lucy* appeared to him, by the contraſt, with redoubled luſtre.

*Lucy*

*Lucy* was too well convinced of the fidelity of her lover, to be alarmed at his behaviour to *Harriot*; and ſo far was ſhe from ſuſpecting that a plot was laid by the latter, to diſturb her peace, that ſhe pleaſed herſelf with the numberleſs little airs which her friend played off to engage his attention, becauſe ſhe was fully ſatisfied that all her airs would be exerted to no purpoſe.

When two amiable objects are thoroughly ſatisfied of each other's affection and fidelity, they are not eaſily diverted from their attachment. But theſe are the objects which a coquet cannot bear—To ſee two people happy in each other's company, and as faithful as turtles, is too much; for, having no notion of ſuch happineſs and fidelity herſelf, ſhe thinks them ridiculous in others; and, out of mere miſchief, ſets her wits to work to deſtroy the dove-like union.

While

While *Harriot* was chatting one morning with the *Pikes*, the captain entered the room, with *Lucy*, and propoſed a turn in the *Park*. They conſented without heſitation. It was a fine noon in autumn, which tempted them to ſaunter in the faſhionable walk, till dreſſing-time. When they had been there about twenty minutes, they were accoſted by Sir *Charles Tinſel*, a young baronet, whoſe chief accompliſhments were beſtowed on him by his taylor, hair-dreſſer, and milliner.—He was quite a man of faſhion, and loved finery as he loved his life, and of that the moſt glittering kind; and took as much pains to embelliſh his perſon, as ſome odd people to cultivate their minds. He was a handſome, impudent fellow, but his beauty was too feminine. He was as proper a man for a dangler as ever was made, and every woman was fond of having Sir *Charles* by her ſide, though ſhe did not care a pin for his company.—He knew

knew all the ſecret hiſtory of the town, and nobody ever tattled at a tea-table with a better grace. Every place was alive and merry when Sir *Charles* appeared; for he was always good-natured, and full of the moſt diverting intelligence.

Sir *Charles* was one of *Lucy's* many admirers. He dangled after her whereever he could find her, and, by his unwearied aſſiduity, would have alarmed any man but *Pike*, who was ſo well aſſured of being in poſſeſſion of the heart of his miſtreſs, that he cared not who buzzed about her ears.—Sir *Charles*, therefore, after a general ſalute, and a few faſhionable compliments, ſhrewd obſervations on the company, and deep reflections on the weather, directed his diſcourſe particularly to *Lucy*.

*Harriot*, who had contrived all the morning, by prating with a perpetual fluency to the captain, to engroſs his attention,

tention, now thought ſhe had "a glorious, "golden opportunity" to make him jealous about *Lucy's* behaviour to the baronet, to whom ſhe chatted with the utmoſt unreſerve, becauſe ſhe beheld him with the utmoſt indifference. She was happy in herſelf, convinced of the fidelity of her lover, and therefore entertained the knight with the utmoſt eaſineſs and familiarity.—The innocent, meaning no harm themſelves, ſuſpect no ill deſigns in others; and, therefore, by the openneſs of their behaviour, too often, undeſignedly, facilitate the execution of the worſt.

*Harriot*, when ſhe came to that part of the walk which is oppoſite to the *German Chappel*, complained of a violent pain in her head, which would not ſuffer her to ſtay any longer in the *Park*. This accident diſconcerted the little party extremely. The captain—an utter ſtranger would have done the ſame—offered to wait on her home, and, for that purpoſe, attempted to call a chair. "Hold, ſir, ſaid the ba-

"ronet—

" ronet—a little patience, if you pleaſe—
" a better thought than yours is juſt
" come into my head—My carriage is in
" the *Friary*. If Miſs *Airy* is able to walk
" ſo far, it is very much at her ſervice,
" and you may accompany her."—Some of my readers will, peradventure, ſay, that Sir *Charles* ſhould have offered his hand with his carriage. But the reader of penetration, in matters of this ſort, will very ſoon gueſs at the motives by which he was influenced.

*Harriot* thanked him for his obliging offer, and accepted of it. She was conducted by *Pike*.—They all attended her to the door, and, when the coachman had received his orders, wiſhed her a ſpeedy recovery, and told her, they would ſoon call on her in *Hill-Street* before dinner.

*Harriot*, before ſhe rolled into *Piccadilly*, very much ſurpriſed her companion, by accoſting him in the following manner: " I am going, captain, to communicate

" ſome

" ſome intelligence to you, which you, I " believe, little expect to hear. In the " firſt place, I muſt inform you, that my " head-ach was a mere feint—I never " was better in my life; but complained, " in hopes of having an opportunity to " open my heart to you;—and my inno- " cent little ſtratagem has luckily ſuc- " ceeded. I have long been acquainted " with your agreeable ſiſters, and, on " their account, as well as your own, " have always had a ſincere regard for " you." — " Bleſs me, madam," cried *Pike*, full of aſtoniſhment, " why all this " preamble? what mighty ſecret are you " going to diſcover?" " You ſhall hear," replied ſhe, " inſtantly: It is, becauſe I " have a regard for you, that I now ad- " viſe you to beware of *Lucy*. She is " my intimate. I know you have ſettled " your affections on her, but wonder at " it. Her outſide is ſtriking, but, be- " lieve me, captain, ſhe is not what ſhe

"ſeems—I know the inward motions of "her heart—Sir *Charles* is your rival. "His title and eſtate dazzle her. She is, "at this time, baiting all her traps to "ſecure him for a huſband. She en- "courages your addreſſes, and makes "you believe, ſhe is faithful to *you* alone. "But ſhe will only encourage your ad- "dreſſes till ſhe has carried her points, "and only be faithful to you, till ſhe has "entangled another in her net. Take "no notice of theſe friendly hints to any "body breathing, but watch her well."

*Pike* was, as many more would be in his ſituation, thunder-ſtruck at what he had heard, but muſtered up reſolution enough to thank *Harriot* for her concern for his welfare. "Come, then," ſaid ſhe, "let us roll back again, and reſume our "chearfulneſs. Our friends will be vaſtly "ſurpriſed, to find me ſo ſoon recovered, "without ſuſpecting the cauſe of my re- "treat." The ſtring was pulled, and they returned.

They

They re-entered the *Park*, through the Palace, and ſoon joined their companions. *Lucy* and the *Pikes* flew to *Harriot* with open arms, and congratulated her on her being, in ſo ſhort a time, recovered; for her lively looks convinced them, that her diſorder was vaniſhed. Nor was the baronet ſilent on the occaſion: he welcomed her with his uſual *politeſſe*, and a profuſion of well-turned compliments, which are always agreeable, though we know they mean nothing, and though we deſpiſe the perſon from whoſe lips they are laviſhed on us.

They were all merry but *Pike*. He, though not of a credulous diſpoſition, was ſtaggered by the hints which *Harriot* had thrown out.——They made him thoughtful, and unfit for ſpirited converſation. He was but juſt able to expreſs approbation or diſlike, by a Yes, or a No, but abſolutely unable to open a dialogue with vivacity, and to keep it up with

ſpirit. He watched, minutely, every word, every look, every motion of *Lucy*, (who, unconſcious of having in the leaſt deviated from the rules of decorum, prattled away, unconcernedly, to *Tinſel*) with the vigilance of an *Argus*. Her gaiety was now of the utmoſt diſſervice to her. It confirmed the aſſertions of her friend, and inflamed the jealouſy of her lover.—Every ſyllable ſhe uttered to Sir *Charles*, in the innocent gaiety of her heart, increaſed the captain's diſquietude; and every time ſhe ſpoke, ſhe planted a dagger in that heart, which ſhe always thought, at thoſe moments, bounded with particular delight.

It grew late, and they ſeparated. *Pike*, and his ſiſters one way; *Harriot*, *Lucy*, and Sir *Charles* another. *Lucy* made an effort to accompany the *Pikes*, but *Harriot* prevented her deſign, by taking her under the arm, and ſaying, "Come, my "dear girl, you ſhall ſtep home with me—

"I have

"I have ſomething very intereſting to "communicate———Sir *Charles*, Good-"morrow."—"No, no, madam," ſaid he, "that *bon jour* won't ſatisfy me—I am "not ſo ready to part with ſuch agreeable "company. You muſt give me leave to "wait on you home."

Sir *Charles* took leave of *Harriot* and *Lucy* at the houſe of the former, who immediately carried her friend into her dreſſing-room, and thus began: "Had "I not a particular eſteem for you, my "deareſt *Lucy*, I ſhould not concern my-"ſelf with your affairs: but I cannot ſee "you innocently playing on the brink of "a precipice, without informing you of "your danger. You think yourſelf ſure "of *Pike's* heart. You think he has the "ſincereſt affection for you. You are "groſsly deceived. He made his ad-"dreſſes to a girl you little dream of.— "I, *Lucy*, am your rival. But you need "not be afraid of me, for I ſhall give him

" no encouragement. He diſcloſed his
" paſſion, while we were together in the
" chariot, and thereby rouzed my indig-
" nation ſo much, that my head-ach flew
" away like a fog at the ſun's approach;
" and I intreated him to let the coachman
" drive us back again as faſt as he could.
" I was highly pleaſed to join you; but
" walked with ſome uneaſineſs, becauſe I
" longed, impatiently, to tell you what I
" had heard. Make a proper uſe, my
" dear *Lucy*, of theſe hints, and take care
" not to confide too much in the profeſſi-
" ons of ſo fickle a mortal. Men, as
" ſoon as they think they have made a
" conqueſt of a woman's heart, too often
" ſlight it.—*Pike* is fully ſatisfied, that he
" is in poſſeſſion of yours, and therefore
" ſets not the value on it which he ought.
" Inconſtancy! thy name is man! Be
" not, however, diſconcerted, nor caſt
" down.—Were I in your ſituation, ſuch
" unmerited behaviour from the man I
loved,

" loved, would rouſe my reſentment, and
" not depreſs my ſpirits. Retaliation, in
" love-affairs, has commonly a good effect.
" People ſeldom are acquainted with the
" worth of a thing, till they have loſt it.
" Make him believe you have no regard
" for him, and he will, probably, veer
" about to his old corner: but while he
" imagines you doat on him, he will pity,
" perhaps laugh, at your weakneſs, and
" think you beneath his notice. Sir
" *Charles*, I know, looks at you with ad-
" miring eyes—Give him a few hopes,
" entertain him with your uſual vivacity,
" and make *Pike* jealous, by ſeeming to
" liſten to his *douceurs* with pleaſure and
" attention." " O *Harriot*, *Harriot*," ſaid
ſhe, ready to ſink into the floor, (what
girl would not, in her ſituation, have
been as ſeverely ſhocked?)—" with how
" horrid a tale have you tortured my ears!
" The things you have uttered are incre-
" dible—I cannot believe them—and yet

" the coldneſs of his behaviour to me,
" when he returned with you from the
" chariot, alarms me extremely; and
" makes me almoſt give credit to them.
" —How unhappy will be my condition,
" if time confirms my ſuſpicions!—But
" I will wait with patience, and hope
" for ſome turn in my favour. I can-
" not think of regaining his affections
" by the methods you mention—ſuch
" experiments, *Harriot*, are often uſed,
" I know, by bold girls, but are always
" dangerous, and often fatal. Adieu,
" my dear *Harriot*, I thank you for your
" ſollicitude about me. I will make a viſit
" in the afternoon, to the amiable ſiſters
" of my fickle lover, and conſult, with
" them, how to act; for they, I know,
" are thoroughly in my intereſt, and will
" be ſhocked to hear of this charge againſt
" their brother. By imparting my griefs
" to them, their weight will be leſſened,
" and I may, perhaps, by their aſſiſtance,

" develop

"develop a myſtery, which is, at preſent, "beyond my comprehenſion."

At the concluſion of this ſpeech, ſhe took her leave, without waiting for an anſwer, and, in the afternoon, went to the *Pike-houſe* as ſhe propoſed. They were at tea *en famille*; the captain was with them. When ſhe entered the room, he was diſconcerted, but concealed the uneaſineſs of his heart, as well as he could, under the maſk of a ſmiling face. The reſt of the family received her with their uſual affability and good humour.—Soon after the tea-equipage was removed, *Lucy* intreated her friends to retire with her to their cloſet. They went to it immediately. *Lucy* unboſomed herſelf without reſerve, diſcloſed the ſecrets of her heart, and vented every grief which tormented it. They heard her with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, beheld her with the greateſt compaſſion, and moſt earneſtly aſſured her that they would

uſe

uſe all their endeavours to ſolve ſo knotty a riddle. "I cannot believe," ſaid Miſs *Pike*, "that my brother has acted ſo "vile a part. *Harriot* has been miſin-"formed." — "Ay," ſaid Miſs *Maria*, "ſome envious creatures, I dare ſwear, "have vented this diabolical plot, to "make you both unhappy. My bro-"ther has loved you long, and has acted "on every occaſion like a man of honour, "and therefore I will not give credit to "any report againſt him." They both comforted their afflicted friend, and repeatedly declared they would undertake, with the greateſt diligence, to come at the truth of the affair.

*Lucy* then took her leave, and went away with a lightened heart, becauſe ſhe flattered herſelf that an *eclaireſſement* would be the conſequence of a ſtrict enquiry. But, unluckily for her, the only perſon who could diſpel her doubts, and reſtore her mind to its wonted tranquillity, was

out

out of the way at the time when his preſence was moſt wanted and deſired. The captain, before his ſiſters could find an opportunity to interrogate him about his behaviour to *Lucy*, was ſummoned, by his commanding officer, into *Derbyſhire*.

*Harriot*, who dreaded a diſcovery of her black deſigns, received the news of *Pike's* ſudden journey with the higheſt ſatisfaction: for ſhe had, ever ſince *Lucy's* departure from her, felt a thouſand painful ſenſations, leſt the two perſons whoſe repoſe ſhe had ſo much diſturbed, ſhould, by an interview with each other, find out the author of their diſquietudes. —When a woman cannot make the man ſhe likes, pay the regard to her which ſhe expects, but ſees him offering his adorations to another, envy, jealouſy, and all the ſoul-diſtracting paſſions, take poſſeſſion of her, and urge her to make thoſe wretched by whoſe union her

own

own felicity is interrupted. *Harriot* had all theſe paſſions ſtirring within her. She made a point of gaining the captain's affections, merely for the ſake of conqueſt, for love was a ſtranger to her breaſt. In all her intrigues ſhe thought only of increaſing the number of her admirers. Thoſe, therefore, who treated her with indifference, alarmed her pride, ſtung her to the quick, and were, from that moment, marked out as proper objects to feel the force of her reſentment.

Many people, when they are bent upon the execution of a deſign, are apt, through an eagerneſs to outwit others, to outwit themſelves. *Harriot* was one of theſe. The method ſhe took to ſeparate the captain and his *Lucy*, was the moſt abſurd and imprudent ſhe could have thought of. Had ſhe not been hurried away by her paſſions, ſhe would have conſidered, that her plot

was

was formed too haſtily, and could not long be a ſecret. *Harriot*, ſoon after the captain's departure, received an invitation from an aunt ſhe had near the place where his regiment was quartered. It was the luckieſt for her that could have happened: becauſe it would give her frequent opportunities of ſeeing *Pike*, and would, probably, introduce her to new adventures.

The firſt time ſhe met with *Pike* was at a ball. He, knowing ſhe was an excellent dancer, choſe her for his partner, and, believing her to be his friend, becauſe, not yet acquainted with her true character, behaved to her with a great deal of complaiſance. Theſe were natural motives, and, in his ſituation, rational.—And ſhe, miſtaking politeneſs for ſomething more, too haſtily concluded, as moſt of her ſex are very apt to do, on ſimiler occaſions, that he was entirely at her devotion, danced with unuſual

unuſual ſpirit. Her eyes ſparkled with uncommon luſtre, and her feet bounded with uncommon agility. She was the moſt ſtriking figure in the place, and every girl devoured her with envy.—Vanity has its advantages. We ſeldom appear conſiderable to others, when we appear of no conſequence to ourſelves.

Before the evening was half ſpent, *Pike* received a letter, which diſconcerted him ſo much, that he retired to his apartments in the town, after having made a ſlight apology for leaving the room ſo abruptly. When he had ſhut himſelf up in his chamber, he re-peruſed the contents, and, at the cloſe of every paragraph, felt pangs which thoſe only, in his ſituation, can feel, and which are not, even by thoſe, to be deſcribed.

*Harriot*, rightly imagining that one, or both, of the captain's ſiſters would write to him, and by making uſe of her name, convince him how much he had

had been deceived, and how ill he had been treated, bribed all the ſervants to convey the letters which were directed to him, to one of her *confidentes*, who had orders to forward them immediately under cover to her, wherever ſhe was from home. A long letter from Miſs *Pike*, to her brother, came to her on the ball-day, the contents of which would have made him the happieſt of men, and herſelf the moſt contemptible of women. This letter, therefore, ſhe ſecreted, and forged another from the ſame perſon to anſwer her purpoſe, which ſhe diſpatched, as ſhe thought, to his apartments, after the ball was begun, that he might have it to ruminate upon when he retired to reſt. His ſervants, however, having received poſitive orders to poſt away with any letter or meſſage which was left for him, interrupted him in the abovementioned manner, and, by a miſtake, very unlucky for *Harriot*, but

very

very fortunate for *Pike*, the letter ſhe intended to conceal from him was delivered.

*Harriot*, as ſoon as ſhe returned to her aunt, was ſenſible of her error, and almoſt diſtracted to think on the blunder ſhe had committed: but at laſt, compoſed her unquiet mind, by forming a ſcheme to recover the letter from *Pike* in the ſame manner ſhe procured it from his ſiſter. She diſpatched a truſty fellow, belonging to the family, the next morning to the captain's lodgings, and bribed him to inſinuate himſelf into his valet's favour, and to perſuade him, by certain irreſiſtible arguments, to plunder his maſter's pockets while he was aſleep, the following evening.—But how ſhall I deſcribe the confuſion ſhe was in when her truſty meſſenger returned, without having executed his commiſſion? he only returned to fill her heart with grief, envy, jealouſy and rage. Every hope vaniſhed

when

when ſhe was told, that the captain ſet out poſt for *London* the preceeding night. This laſt diſappointment almoſt turned her head: and, to increaſe her anguiſh, ſhe had the mortification to receive, a few days afterwards, the following letter from her old companion Miſs *Pike*.

" O *Harriot*, *Harriot*, how low art thou " ſunk in my eſteem! The plot, the vile " plot, which you laid to ſeparate two of " the moſt deſerving people in the world, " has united them more cloſely than ever. " You have, undeſignedly, made them " completely happy. They were married " this morning, with a ſpecial licenſe. I " ſend you an account of this marriage, " becauſe I know it will gall you. If " you have any ſenſibility, you will ſee " yourſelf in the moſt odious, moſt con- " temptible light, and make a reſolution " never to act again ſo criminal a part. " I need not, I believe, tell you, that your

" viſits will be no more agreeable to any " part of our family; nor can I, indeed, " imagine that you will, after what has " paſſed, make any attempt to renew " them. Before I conclude, however, " let me adviſe you to behave with more " honour and circumſpection for the fu- " ture, otherwiſe you may, by that ſillieſt " of paſſions, the love of conqueſt, be " inſtigated to plunge yourſelf into diffi- " culties, perhaps, never to be ſurmount- " ed. Your behaviour, baſe as it is, is " forgiven even by us, the moſt injured " by it, but it will never be forgotten.—

" Farewell."

*Harriot* could not read this letter without emotion. The home truths it contained ſtruck her, for the firſt time, with ſhame and confuſion, and, for a while, deprived her of her vivacity; but pride, and the hopes of being one day able to have " revenges on them all," raiſed it to its uſual pitch. In

In this manner did *Harriot* loſe the intimacy and eſteem of a moſt amiable family, by giving way to a ſilly paſſion, and having recourſe to the weakeſt, not to ſay wickedeſt, means for the gratification of it.—When a woman's ruling paſſion is the love of admiration, it not only urges her to commit a thouſand ridiculous actions, but ſhe is too often impelled by it to add baſeneſs to abſurdity, and to folly, vice.

To do juſtice, however, to the character of *Harriot*, notwithſtanding this adventure, which makes her appear in a very unamiable light, I muſt confeſs, that I believe ſhe was actuated entirely by vanity, and the deſire of conqueſt, and not by malice. She was the moſt mixed character I ever knew; for at the ſame time that ſhe made herſelf ſo contemptible, by her behaviour, when a man has been the object in view, and a rival the mark of her envy, I have ſeen ſuch inſtances of the goodneſs of her heart, that would make amends for a

thouſand errors of the head.—To the errors of her head, the irregularities of her actions were chiefly owing; and, by a wrong education, thoſe errors were, every day, ſtrengthened and increaſed.—If *Harriot*, with her natural good underſtanding, had been brought up in a different manner, ſhe would not have furniſhed the publiſher of her memoirs with ſo many inſtructive ſcenes, and uſeful hints, for the conduct of female life.

*END of the* FIRST BOOK.

MEMOIRS

# MEMOIRS
OF
# A COQUET.

## BOOK II.

THE unexpected concluſion of the adventure in the foregoing Book, affected *Harriot* ſo much, that ſhe did not, for a great while, recover from the ſhock it gave to her ſpirits.—The ill ſucceſs of her ſchemes, the loſs of her agreeable friends, and, more than all, the ridiculous light in which ſhe

knew ſhe muſt appear to them, were, to the laſt degree, mortifying. The impreſſion which theſe diſappointments made on her mind, was too ſtrong to be effaced; and all the amuſements ſhe had recourſe to, could not divert her attention, long, from a ſubject which ſhe tried all ſhe could not to think of.—She had a turn for poetry, and ſhe wrote verſes; ſhe had a genius for drawing, and ſhe employed her pencil—but neither that nor her pen, could baniſh intruding thoughts. — To thoſe, whoſe minds are at eaſe, poetry and painting are amuſements, of all others, the moſt pleaſing; but, when there is the leaſt perturbation within, the ſweeteſt numbers have no muſic for the ear, and the brighteſt colours fade before the eye. When we *think* on diſagreeable ſubjects, we are blind to colours, and are deaf to ſounds.

Mrs. *Airy*, *Harriot's* aunt, her father's ſiſter, had nothing particular enough in her

her perſon, to make a ſtriking picture; but her manners were pleaſing, and her morals pure.—Without bright parts, ſhe had a ſtrong underſtanding, and was, though an old maid, thoroughly good-humoured herſelf, and never ſo happy, as when ſhe ſaw thoſe about her ſo. She was the Lady *Bountiful* of———, and the poor always found in her a liberal benefactreſs.—With the poſſeſſion of riches, ſhe had the ſpirit to enjoy them, and *her* enjoyment aroſe from hoſpitality.—For her mildneſs and munificence, ſhe was univerſally loved and revered.—Every body who came to her houſe—the door was always in motion—met with a hearty welcome, and nobody left it without a ſmiling face, and a happy heart.

Such characters, if not ſo ſhining as thoſe which make a greater figure in the world, are bleſſings to ſociety; and did we not meet, ſometimes, with a *Bountiful* in our walk through life, we ſhould grow

out of humour with our ſpecies, and become ſoured with miſanthropy. Selfiſhneſs is ſo predominant a paſſion, that when we hear of a man or woman remarkably benevolent, we conſider them as curioſities, and eſtimate their value accordingly.

With ſo worthy, and ſo affable a woman, *Harriot* ſpent her time very agreeably, and received a great deal of entertainment, by obſerving the various characters which came in her way.

To thoſe who have a taſte for obſervation, and a turn for humour, a new character is quite a feaſt. From this taſte, and this turn, *Harriot* met with much diverſion.—Few people ſaw the *ridiculous* ſooner; few people expoſed it with greater force.—The country ladies, of her aunt's acquaintance, afforded many ſcenes truly comic, to a girl of *Harriot's* town-breeding; and thoſe ſcenes ſhe heightened with her uſual ſpirit, when ſhe copied them

them on paper.—She was too giddy to be a dramatic writer, but I have ſeen dialogues of her compoſition, which our beſt comic-writers would not have been aſhamed of. Her plots were extravagant, but her characters were marked with ſpirit, and her language was properly adapted.

*Harriot* came home one evening, from viſiting ſome of the neighbouring families, in ſo violent a fit of laughter, that her aunt, who had been hindered from going with her, by an old companion, which ſhe inherited from her father with her fortune, thought her intellects a little out of order.—But ſhe could not help laughing with her niece, though unacquainted with the cauſe of her mirth.

*Harriot*, as ſoon as ſhe could compoſe her muſcles—thoſe who are diſpoſed to riſibility know how difficult it is to be decently merry on certain occaſions—ſcreamed out with her uſual vivacity—"La, madam, I have a monſtrous deal of

"news

" news to tell you.——I went, firſt, to
" Mrs. *Meanwell's*, as you deſired me:
" ſhe may be a very good ſort of woman,
" and, I believe, ſhe is, but is the greateſt
" oddity I ever ſaw, and her daughter the
" ſtrangeſt creature breathing. They
" both look like family pictures of the
" laſt age. Their dreſs is ſo very antique,
" and their manner ſo unfaſhionable, that
" I can't poſſibly reliſh them. After they
" had formally ſaluted me, and conducted
" me to the upper end of the room, with
" as much ceremony, as if I had been a
" dutcheſs, young *Meanwell* entered the
" room. A downright clod-pole, and I
" would defy *Hogarth* himſelf, were he
" now living, to ſtrike out of his prolific
" brain a more drole and diverting figure.
" As he has had his education chiefly in
" the ſtable, he is like a fiſh out of his
" element, in the parlour. He coloured
" when he came into the room, like a
" boarding-ſchool girl, the firſt time ſhe
" dances

" dances in public; and ſeemed to be as
" much at a loſs to make uſe of his legs
" and arms, as one of Mr. *Hart's* grown
" gentlemen moving a minuet. And,
" when he ſat down, he rolled about in
" his chair, rubbed his hands, ſcratched
" his head, and twiſted his body into ſo
" many uncouth poſtures, that you would
" have thought *St. Vitus* was dancing a
" jig in him. He was as much afraid to
" look in my face, as if I had been a ba-
" ſiliſk, and returned anſwers to all my
" queſtions with his eyes rivetted on the
" floor.

" Miſs *Meanwell* would, with the aſſiſt-
" ance of a town-education, be a very fine
" girl. She has received a great many
" accompliſhments from nature, which,
" for want of *that*, appear not in an ad-
" vantageous light. She is, at preſent,
" nothing but a pretty Dowdy." " As
" for your town-education," interrupted
Mrs. *Airy*, " I think the majority of girls
" are

" are undone by it. The beauties of na-
" ture are oftener ſpoilt, than improved,
" by the tricks of art." " Well, ma-
" dam," replied *Harriot*, briſkly, " we
" won't enter upon a debate now on this
" ſubject, if you pleaſe, for I am full of
" my viſits, and quite wild to tell you
" what paſſed at them. Miſs *Meanwell*,"
continued ſhe, " dreſſes her head ſo
" frightfully, that ſhe looks more like a
" milk-maid, or a hay-maker, than the
" daughter of a country gentleman, who
" keeps a great deal of genteel company,
" and can give her a handſome fortune.
" But there are ſome people in the world
" ſo naturally void of taſte, that one
" might as well expect to ſee you, madam,
" covetous and ill-natured, as to beat it
" into them." A compliment ſo artfully introduced, could not but have the deſired effect. It pleaſed the old lady extremely, and the more ſo, becauſe ſhe did not in the leaſt expect it. Her eyes twinkled with

with joy, and the dimples of ſatisfaction played about her lips. To flatter with ſucceſs, we ſhould always flatter by ſurpriſe. "After half an hour's inſignificant "chat," continued *Harriot*, "for I knew "not what to ſay to them, and they were "equally at a loſs to converſe with *me*, "our manners were ſo widely different, "I made my civilities, and ordered the "coach to Mrs. *Vainlove's*, where I found "a room full of characters as oppoſite to "each other, as a ball is to a funeral, or "the king's troops to my lord mayor's. "Mrs. *Vainlove*, and her daughter, are "the moſt affected creatures I ever met "with, and make themſelves more ſo, by "ridiculouſly aiming to dreſs and talk "out of the ruſtic way. They deafened "my ears, as ſoon as I was ſeated, with "a million of impertinent queſtions about "operas and plays, routs and ridottos, "and all the faſhionable diverſions "they could think of." "Well,

"to

"to be ſure, Miſs *Airy*," ſaid the lady mother, "you lead a heavenly life in "town; you never are at home, I ſuppoſe. "If *I* reſided in *London*, I ſhould find ſo "many delightful places to go to, that I "ſhould never think of making uſe of "my houſe but to ſleep in, and to do a "few neceſſary matters which one could "not do ſo well abroad." "Dear, Miſs, ſaid the dainty daughter, "don't you go "very often to the play?—Law, well, I "wiſh I could ſee Muſter *Garrick*; I have "heard he makes love ſo ſweetly—I long "to ſee him. How does he look, Miſs, "when he makes love?" "Fie, fie, "*Biddy*," ſaid her mother, "young girls, "at your time of life, ſhould not think "of the fellows, and talk ſo feelingly of "love—you are not of age, yet. 'Tis "time enough to think of lovers. But "your head is always running upon ſuch "ſilly, nonſenſical ſtuff." "I don't "eſteem it ſuch contemptible ſtuff," replied

plied Miſs; "indeed, mama—ſure I'm "old enough to know what's what, tho' "I have not the happineſs to be married." "Happineſs!" cried her mother, with a ſignificant ſneer; "ay, child, 'tis a ſign "you are a raw unexperienced girl, and "know nothing of the world—I thought "as you do, at your age, that matrimony "was a charming thing, but I am heartily "ſick of it. For a month or two it is "pretty enough, to be ſure, becauſe it is "ſomething new; but the moſt agreeable "things in nature become hideous and "horrid, when we have had them ſome "time, and grow too dull to be endured— "Mr. *Vainlove* was mighty complaiſant "when he courted me, and, indeed, it "was his duty ſo to do, (for I was every "way his equal) and made love, I muſt "ſay that for him, as well as any man in "*England*; but, ſoon after he had feaſted "upon my beauties (I was counted hand-"ſome once, but a tribe of brats have

"ſpoilt

" ſpoilt my complexion, and made a
" bundle of my body) he grew cloyed
" with being always treated with the ſame
" diſh, and is now ſo exceſſive croſs and
" humourſome, that I live like a toad
" under a harrow. But I aſk pardon for
" engroſſing the converſation—Pray, ſir,
" what news was there in town, when you
" left it?" (ſaid ſhe to a major *Muſquet* whoſe regiment was quartered in the neighbourhood)—" This major, I find, is
" an admirer of Miſs *Vainlove*—for her
" money, I ſuppoſe; for, I believe, that
" is the only charm ſhe has to attract him
" with. Before I tell you the major's
" news, let me deſcribe her dreſs. She
" had a dark green night-gown—only
" think of that, for a girl who is as brown
" as a berry—with yellow robings and
" facings, a pink ſtomacher, and a purple
" hat, with cherry-coloured ſtreamers,
" which touched her ſhoulders. Her mo-
" ther's dreſs was full as prepoſterous.—

" You

"You know her enormous ſize.—She ſat "ſwelling away in a white ſatin ſuit of "cloaths, and was furiouſly decorated "with ſcarlet ribbons, from head to foot. "—Now for the news." "Why, ma-"dam," replied the major, "the celebrated "Miſs *Sparkle* is eloped from her father's "houſe, and gone to *Holland* with Briga-"dier *Cannon*."—"Well, I am glad of it "with all my heart," ſaid Miſs *Scandal*, an old maid who will never ſee forty-five again. "I always thought her behaviour "was void of decorum, and expected to "hear of her playing ſuch a prank. Pray, "major, how was their intrigue found out? "for I conclude that the detection of it has "obliged them to hide themſelves ſo far "from home." "I will tell you, madam," replied he, "the whole ſtory, juſt as I "heard it from thoſe who know a great "deal about the parties concerned, and "would not circulate a falſe report upon "any account. The brigadier and his

" wife made a month's viſit at Sir *Harry*
" *Sparkle's* country ſeat. Mrs. *Cannon*,
" having obſerved, ſeveral mornings, that
" her huſband left her about day-break,
" in order to take the air, for the benefit
" of his health, and having had ſome rea-
" to imagine, from his behaviour to Miſs
" *Sparkle*, that they were too intimately ac-
" quainted with each other, was urged, by
" curioſity, (where is the woman who
" would not be curious on ſuch an inter-
" eſting occaſion ?) to watch his motions,
" in order to be ſatisfied whether her ſuſpi-
" cionswere rationally founded. She opened
" the chamber door, one morning, gently,
" as ſoon as he had ſhut it, and, as gently,
" following his foot-ſteps, found out, to
" her no ſmall vexation, that Miſs *Sparkle's*
" bed-chamber was his airing-place. She
" ruſhed into the room—he forgot to turn
" the key—full of reſentment, when ſhe
" thought they were happy together, up-
" braided him with all the vehemence of

" an

" an injured wife, for having been falſe to
" her, ſnatched up his cloaths, and then
" raiſed the houſe. Theſe things were
" executed almoſt as ſoon as thought of,
" for paſſionate people are, generally, very
" expeditious. When Sir *Harry*, and his
" lady, and the other viſiters they had
" with them, and their ſervants, were aſ-
" ſembled, with looks of aſtoniſhment at
" being ſo unexpectedly called upon, ſhe
" carried them directly to the loving
" couple, threw open the curtains, and
" expoſed them to the whole family. This
" abrupt diſcovery, however, did not
" damp the flames of love in their bo-
" ſoms, but rather made them burn more
" fiercely. They roſe, and breakfaſted,
" *en famille*, with as much unconcern as
" if nothing remarkable had happened,
" and ſoon afterwards ſallied forth toge-
" ther, without taking leave of any body."

" When the major had finiſhed his nar-
" rative, various were the opinions concern-

" ing Mrs. *Cannon's* behaviour. Some " thought ſhe ſhewed a proper reſentment, " and acted with a becoming ſpirit; others " blamed her for being ſo haſty, and were " inclinedto think that ſhe had taken a very " imprudent ſtep." " A vile fellow," ſaid Mrs. *Fury*, " to preſume to break his " marriage vow! If *I* was to catch *my* " huſband playing ſuch abominable tricks, " he ſhould have nothing to do with me " again, I aſſure you. But, indeed, I uſe " my beſt endeavours to prevent his go- " ing aſtray, by never ſuffering him to " relax in the duties of a huſband.—— " Things are come to a fine paſs, truly, " if a pack of brazen-faced huſſies ſhall " wriggle themſelves into ſober families, " and, by coquetting with married men, " make them weary of their wives com- " pany. While *I* have a man, I *will* " have him to myſelf, or know the reaſon " why.—Mrs. *Cannon* acted like a woman " of ſpirit. I hate, and abhor, your tame

" creatures,

" creatures, who let a man have a ſeraglio
" of trolloping flirts, without daring to
" aſſert their prerogative." " What you
" ſay, madam," replied Mrs. *Patience*, " is
" very right. 'Tis a ſad thing, undoubt-
" edly, that the repoſe of ſo many wedded
" pairs ſhould be diſturbed by the artful
" intrigues of a third perſon. But, tho'
" your obſervations are judicious, I think
" your reſolutions are too precipitate.—
" When a wife finds her huſband's love
" to ſlacken and decay, and diſcovers all
" his new attachments, ſhe will ſhew more
" prudence, notwithſtanding the great-
" neſs of the provocation, in ſtifling her
" reſentment, and trying to regain his
" affections, by mildneſs and complacency,
" than in driving him to extremities, and,
" by making his amours publick, render
" herſelf thoroughly his averſion. Mrs.
" *Cannon* had reaſon to be ſhocked at her
" huſband's behaviour, but did not,
" in my humble opinion, take the right

" method to reclaim him. By expoſing " *him*, ſhe has expoſed *herſelf*, and muſt, " therefore, be called an indiſcreet wo- " man." " Indiſcreet!" replied Mrs. *Fury*, reddening; " Good G—d! Mrs. " *Patience*, I am amazed at your coolneſs " and indifference on ſuch an occaſion; " becauſe you have got a conſtant, good- " humoured huſband yourſelf, you don't " make any allowance for thoſe who have " faithleſs and changeable ones to deal " with. In ſhort, ſo many women are " left in the lurch, now-a-days, by their " huſbands, that none of us are ſafe, at " this rate. Why, there's Counſellor " *Browbeat*, after having been married " twenty years, has abuſed his wife ſo " much, by having to do with his maids, " that ſhe is forced to leave him, and live " like a widow. And I commend her for ſo " doing; for what virtuous woman could " bear to take up with the leavings of her " ſervants? Mrs. *Browbeat* is quite in the

" right

" right to leave ſo mean a wretch to his
" mop-ſqueezers and cynder-wenches—
" Ods, my life, if I ever find Mr. *Fury*
" at that game, I will expoſe him to all
" the town, and make him ſo contemp-
" ible and ridiculous, that he ſhan't be
" able to ſhew his face. I ſhall look upon
" him as dirt and aſhes, and treat him
" accordingly. If all women were to
" make their huſbands ſtand in awe of
" them, they would be better uſed by
" them: but if once they ſpoil them, by
" indulging all their fooliſh whims and
" fancies, they never can have any autho-
" rity over them. When I was married
" to Mr. *Fury*, I ſoon made him to know
" I would be miſtreſs; and, by never
" giving way to him, have remained ſo to
" this hour. I take care to watch him ſo
" cloſely, that he can't have a girl in a
" corner. But if I did'nt keep a good
" look out, I ſuppoſe he would go aſtray
" ſometimes, as other men do, who follow

" the devices of their own hearts. If Mr.
" *Fury* lies in bed of a morning longer
" than I like, I ſay to him, Come, come,
" Mr. *Fury*, get up, get up; what, have
" you a mind to ſleep your ſenſes away?—
" If you muſt ſleep, ſleep in a chair, for
" I *will* have the bed made at the proper
" hour, and that is, early in the morning,
" for that's the time for buſineſs. If he
" makes any hums and haws, and tells
" me, rubbing his eyes, and yawning like
" a drowſy cat, that he wants a little more
" reſt, I ſay to him again, Do'nt tell me
" ſuch nonſenſe and ſtuff: you have been
" ſnoring theſe eight hours, and that is
" long enough, in all conſcience, for a
" man in perfect health. My firſt huſ-
" band, Mr. *Briſk*, was not ſuch a ſleepy
" ſlug as you. Poor dear *Bobby!* I ſhall
" never forget him. A precious crea-
" ture, and did always as I bid him, with-
" out making an hundred and fifty words
" about it. He was only a little too fat,

" but

"but that I did'nt value; for it was no
"vice, but a misfortune.—Precious was
"not to blame for that—People don't
"make themſelves. I am never out of
"humour with any body for what they
"can't help. I am ſure I take a great
"deal of pains to make home clever and
"comfortable to you, and it is very hard
"I muſt not have my own way in a few
"trifling things. There's Mr. *Mildmay*
"lets his wife have her own way in every
"thing in the world, and I am ſure, and
"certain, ſhe does not comport herſelf to
"to him ſo handſomely as I do to you;
"for ſhe often vents her paſſion upon him
"before company, and always ſpeaks to
"him in a peeviſh manner. Now, you can't
"ſay, Mr. *Fury*, that I do ſo; you can't
"charge me with ſuch treatment. You
"muſt own I always ſay what I have to
"ſay to you, when we are by ourſelves.—
"Odſo! I forgot my appointment at Lady
"*Blab's*—She is to have a monſtrous deal

"of

" of company To-night. This news will " be charming fun for us. So, ladies, " your very humble ſervant.—Mrs. *Vain-* " *love*, I hope you will excuſe my abrupt " departure."—" She then bounced from " her chair, and quitted the room with as " much rapidity, as if ſhe was going to ſur- " priſe Mr. *Fury* in the act of fornication."

" Poor *Fury*," ſaid the major, as ſoon as ſhe was out of hearing, " I pity thee " moſt heartily, for being yoked with a " partner who is ſo full of combuſtible " matter!" " Aye, indeed," ſaid Mrs. *Patience*, with her uſual mildneſs, " he " leads a very uncomfortable life with her, " and deſerves much to be pitied, for he " is one of the moſt agreeable and beſt " natured men in the world."

" Pray, ladies," ſaid Mrs. *Vainlove*, " do " you know how Mrs. *Lovechild* does, af- " ter her lying-in? I hear ſhe had a ter- " rible labour, by the obſtinacy and igno- " rance of the midwife"—" Before ſhe

" could

" could receive an anſwer to this enquiry, a " violent rata-tap-tap foretold the approach " of a freſh viſiter; and, in a ſhort time, in " came Mrs. *Notable*, in a violent hurry, and " after ſhe had ſeated herſelf, ſtunned our " ears with the ſilliеſt prattle I ever heard." " I have been told a piece of news to-day, ſaid ſhe, " which I don't know how to " give credit to; it ſeems to me ſo very " unaccountable, I can't believe it. They " ſay Sir *George Niggard* died *inteſtate*; " now, I always thought he was monſtrous " rich." " You miſtake the meaning of " the word, madam, ſaid Mrs. *Patience*. " *Inteſtate* only means *without a will*. You " thought it was *inſolvent*, that is, in *debt*, " and well might you be ſurpriſed to hear " ſuch intelligence." " Aye, you are " right, madam, ſaid Mrs. *Notable*, I al- " ways put one word for another; 'tis a " way I have; but, in ſhort, I have ſuch a " concourſe of things to reflect upon, that " I wonder I don't make more blunders

" than

" than I do. I have all the care of the " family upon this head of mine" (putting her hand to it) " and a great deal of fa- " tigue it is, to be ſure; but I don't " mind that. If I was not to look after " things myſelf, they would ſoon run to " rack and ruin, and the houſe turned " topſy-turvy; but I am trotting up " and down ſtairs, from the garret to " the kitchen, from morning to night, " and never leave my ſervants to do juſt " as they think proper: if I did, I don't " know what would become of Mr. *No-* " *table* and the children. I think it my " duty to be frugal, and to ſpend as little " as I can in houſe-keeping, for my Gen- " tleman takes many a weary ſtep for " what he gets; and it would be very im- " prudent indeed, conſidering the many " accidents we are liable to, not to lay up " ſomething againſt a rainy day. Nobody " knows what they may come to. People " who hold up their heads ſo high, and

" give

" give themſelves toſs-up airs, when they
" roll in money, and live on the fat of
" the land, are greatly to be blamed; for
" the richeſt may loſe every rag they have
" in the world; and when thoſe who are
" proud in their proſperity, meet with a
" downfall, nobody pities them, nor goes
" an inch out of their way to lend them
" an helping hand, and ſave them from
" ruination. But when people, who carry
" themſelves decently, and behave with
" humility, are reduced to narrow circum-
" ſtances, and have much-a-do to make
" both ends meet, they find friends every
" where willing to aſſiſt them, and put
" them on their legs again—But, as I was
" ſaying, I never meddle and make with
" other folks affairs; I have other fiſh to fry,
" and ſhould have enough to do, indeed, if
" I was to run chattering about the pariſh,
" and ſpend my time in goſſiping. I can
" find ſufficient employment at home,
" without gadding abroad like Mrs. *Ramble*.

" There

" There is always ſomething to do in a fa-
" mily. The graſs will never grow under
" my feet. I am ſure I am glad when
" bed-time comes. I never want rocking;
" for I am upon the hoof all day long,
" and exerciſe is exerciſe every where. I
" know ſeveral conceited ladies, who pre-
" tend to be more learned than their neigh-
" bours, turn up their noſes at me for
" minding my family affairs, and think a
" houſe-wife a vulgar creature not worth
" converſing with; but I deſpiſe, from
" the bottom of my ſoul, ſuch lofty
" folks, as much as they can me; for
" certainly it is more honourable for a wo-
" man after ſhe is married and has got
" children, and a houſe and ſervants, to
" take care of the main chance, and to
" buſtle about, and be notable, and ſee
" that every thing is done that is fitting
" in all branches of her family—When
" a woman is employed in this manner, ſhe
" is in her proper *ſpear*, and need not be
" aſhamed

" aſhamed to be catched, doing her duty,
" at any time. If ſhe is, ſhe is a very
" great ſimpleton for her pains. When I
" am about my houſe affairs, I never care
" a pin what dreſs I am in—I hate cere-
" mony as I hate the Pope of *Rome*. My
" buſineſs is, to ſee that every thing is or-
" derly and neat. I had always a mon-
" ſtrous antipathy to naſtineſs from a child,
" but have a prodigious deal of trouble
" to make my maids tidy. *Suſan*, my
" houſe-maid, and *Betty*, my cook, are
" both terrible ſluts, but *Betty's* the worſt
" of the two, for ſhe often ſends up the
" victuals ſo dirty and gritty, that it al-
" moſt turns my ſtomach; and *Suſan* is
" very apt, when I don't watch her as a
" cat does a mouſe, when ſhe ſweeps the
" rooms, to huddle the duſt into a dark
" corner, to ſave herſelf the fatigue of
" carrying it to the tub—As for *Kitty*, my
" own maid, ſhe is the handieſt crea-
" ture that ever ſtuck a pin. She

" gives

" gives me no trouble, but is very
" orderly; and does her buſineſs
" without bidding, which is vaſtly
" agreeable to me who love peace and
" quietneſs, and hate, moſt mortally,
" to be always finding fault; but, really,
" when I ſee things going at ſixes and
" ſevens, I can't ſit ſtill, with my hands
" before me, without ſpeaking. I am na-
" turally of a haſty temper, to be ſure, I
" don't deny it; but if people do as I
" would have them, my paſſion is ſoon
" over, for I am always ready to forgive
" thoſe who are ſorry for their errors, and
" promiſe to be better for the future."—
" Here this empty prater pauſed, and here
" I took an opportunity to leave the room,
" for my patience was quite exhauſted,
" and I was afraid to ſtay till ſhe had put
" her tongue in motion again. The va-
" rious characters, however, which I had
" met with, diverted me ſo much, that I
" laughed all the way home, and now I

" have

" have told you the occaſion of my mirth,
" I believe you don't wonder at my being
" ſo merry." " Not at all child," ſaid
Mrs. *Airy*, " I ſhould have been highly
" diverted myſelf (for I love humour) with
" the company you have left, and have
" been much entertained with your lively
" account of their converſation. I hope
" you will write down what you have
" told me; for I ſhall be much amuſed
" with it ſome winter evening, when you
" are gone to *London*.—However, I would
" not have you run away with wrong no-
" tions about the people you have ſeen at
" your viſit, for moſt of my neighbours
" are very good ſort of people; and, as
" for their oddities, they don't at all leſſen
" them in my eſteem: we all have our
" ſingularities, and if we injure not any
" body by them, the indulgence of them
" is allowable—we ſhould not be too ſe-
" vere on a worthy character, upon the
" whole, for the ſake of a few harmleſs

" foibles. The beſt of us have our fail-
" ings, and it is always our duty, and it
" ſhould be always our pleaſure, to be
" candid where we can, though I know it
" is often hard to keep our raillery within
" proper bounds. I am very glad you
" have been ſo happy in your viſit, and
" will do all in my power to make the
" time paſs away chearfully while you ſtay
" with me."—"You are extremely oblig-
" ing, madam," ſaid *Harriot*, " and I thank
" you for taking ſo much pains to pro-
" cure me amuſement. I never want it at
" *Bounty-Hall*—and ſhall be ſorry to leave
" a place at which I receive ſo many in-
" ducements to continue." *Harriot* threw in this laſt ſtroke, becauſe ſhe knew her aunt's foible was the love of flattery, and becauſe ſhe hoped, by ſtrokes of that ſort, artfully, and apparently without deſign, introduced, to ſtand a fair chance for the largeſt ſhare of the good things ſhe poſ-ſeſſed.—By mentioning this circumſtance,

ſome

ſome readers will think worſe of my heroine than they did before, but a faithful memoir-writer muſt ſuppreſs nothing.—He muſt exhibit his principal character with all its lights and ſhades; and it is not his fault, if the former are eclipſed by the latter.—A perfect character never exiſted; and I have too great regard for the underſtanding of my readers, to ſuppoſe, that they can be pleaſed with the repreſentation of a monſter.

*END of the* SECOND BOOK.

# MEMOIRS
OF
# A COQUET.

## BOOK III.

TO a girl of *Harriot's* diſpoſition, there was a dull ſameneſs, upon the whole, at *Bounty-Hall*, which ſhe could not reliſh.—Her aunt did every thing in her power to entertain her, and to make her days glide away agreeably—But there was a great ſcarcity of men—and without them *Harriot* was nothing.—

To have perſonal charms, and to have nobody to admire thoſe charms, is mortifying; and I know not any female who is not of my opinion—Every girl is not a *Harriot*, but every girl, I believe, though ever ſo homely, has the vanity to think that ſhe has *charms*; and very often ſpoils *a perſon* which would otherwiſe be tolerable, by a number of frightful graces, hideous airs, and horrid attitudes—Beauties may be allowed to call in the aſſiſtance of affectation—But uglineſs and affectation will never go down.

*Harriot*, in a few days afterwards, ſet out for *London*, having received a preſſing letter from her father, to haſten her departure. She left her aunt with ſome reluctance on many accounts, becauſe ſhe had been tenderly and affectionately treated by her; but as ſhe was going to a place more ſuitable to her gay, intriguing diſpoſition, than the manſion-houſe of a ſober aunt, new ſchemes filled her head, and baniſhed

baniſhed the little anxieties ſhe felt when the farewel kiſs was exchanged between them.

She ſat out in a poſt-chaiſe, attended by her maid, and was driven with an agreeable celerity, till one of the wheels broke down in the middle of a common. This accident diſconcerted them all very much, for, as they were ſeveral miles even from a village, immediate aſſiſtance was impoſſible.—To adminiſter ſome comfort, however, ſoon afterwards a ſtage coach appeared. *Harriot*, though ſhe abhorred ſuch a vulgar vehicle, beheld it, then, with no ſmall delight. There was, luckily, a place in it unoccupied. Her maid was, with ſome difficulty, ſqueezed into the baſket. There was ſuch a number of paſſengers before and behind, within and without, men, women and children, pigs, puppies and parrots, that two pair of lean, lank, bony beaſts were not in a very en-

viable ſituation, with ſuch a cumberſome load jogging at their tails.

*Harriot* was jolted to town much ſooner than ſhe expected, for her fellow-travellers diverted her attention, by their dreſs and converſation, from the inelegance of the carriage, and the tireſome ſlowneſs of its motion. An old battered, grey-headed beau, in a copper-coloured coat, laced down the ſeams with tarniſhed gold, and embroidered with greaſe, ſat on her right hand—A more rueful figure fancy cannot paint. The remainder of his dreſs was equally ill-judged and fantaſtical. His waiſtcoat was black ſatin, trimmed with ſilver, his breeches buckſkin, with white ſilk ſtockings rolled over his knees. His eyes, like thoſe of the hag in the Orphan, "with ſcalding rheum were galled and "red;" his cheeks very much reſembled the rind of a withered John apple, and appeared more conſpicuouſly frightful, becauſe they were expoſed by a bag-wig,

fit

fit only for the face of five and twenty. His whole *exterior* was thoroughly forbidding, and his *converſation* did not help to ſet it off. On her left hand ſat a young beau dreſſed very conſiſtently, from his periwig to his pumps, in the height of the mode. He looked the fine gentleman, but his manners were thoſe of a fribble, and his language that of a porter. Oppoſite to her ſat an old lady, who, for a "ſhape, and a face, and an air, and a "mien," was very like one of the witches in *Macbeth*, and had cloaths upon her back, which ſeemed to have been made of thoſe tape-tied curtains which *Pope* ſo humorouſly deſcribes in one of his epiſtles, for they were partly yellow, and partly red, half tawdry, half dirty. But all her horrid *charms*, and gorgon-graces, and all the ſhabbineſs of her apparel, were ſoon forgotten, when ſhe ſpoke. She was a ſenſible woman, ſarcaſtical and ſhrewd, who had ſeen a great deal of the world,

read

read a great many books, and talked on every ſubject with ſuch fluency and judgment, that thoſe who heard her were always too attentive to what ſhe ſaid, to mind how ſhe looked. We are very apt to be prejudiced againſt people at firſt ſight: we are never more abſurd than when we are ſo. The moſt flattering and agreeable outſides often deceive us; and the moſt forbidding ones, when we become acquainted with them, diſcover charms which we overlooked.

The two other places on that ſide were filled by a young academic, ſenſible, but ſo fond of letting every body know, that he had been educated within the walls of a college, that he talked on the commoneſt topics in as pompous a ſtyle, as if he was haranguing in the ſchools; and a teſty old gentleman, diſcontented at public affairs, who ſeldom opened his lips, but to mutter againſt the miniſtry, and rail bitterly againſt their meaſures, becauſe they had

had rejected a ſcheme, he propoſed, to pay off the national debt.

Theſe were the characters which *Harriot* found on her entrance into the coach. After ſhe was ſeated, the young powder-puff, when he had ſtroked his eye-brow with his little finger, in order to diſplay a ſparkle, and patted his cheeks with a cambrick handkerchief, for fear of encouraging a pimple,, thus accoſted her: "I hope, miſs, you will catch no cold by "getting out of your chaiſe, and coming "among us. It might have been, I can "tell you, a d—n—d melancholy affair; "ſuch a thing as that might have done "your buſineſs; for, if we had not came, "as we did, in the nick of time, you "might have been a curſed long while "without meeting a friend to give you a "lift out of the mud. However, its an "ill wind that blows nobody *no* good, "that's for certain. I have often ob-"ſerved, that things which ſeem to be

"d—n—d

"d—n—d misfortunes, turn out, by "G—d, ten times better than we ex- "pected. Therefore, my way is, never "to give the game up. People can ne- "ver do *nothing* if their heart fails them. "It anſwers no end to be down in the "mouth, when every thing does not go "*ſmack-ſmooth* as we would have it. Some- "thing may turn up trumps another "time, and ſet all to rights again.—— "Z—ds, ſir," continued he, to his bro- ther beau, who had been lulled into a ſtate of inſenſibility by his elocution, "I "wiſh you, and your ſnuff-box, *was* at the "devil. Some of your confounded noſe- "powder — che — che — che—has found "the way, che—che—che—to my throat, "and if I don't bait at the next inn, che— "che—che, for a glaſs of *bumbo*, as I "hope for ſalvation, I ſhall—che—che— "che—bring up all my breakfaſt, by "G—d." When this eloquent gentle- man had uttered the two laſt monoſyl- lables

lables with a particular emphaſis, *Whip-well* ſtopped at the uſual whetting place, in order to give his cattle water, and himſelf a more comforting draught. The beau alighted, and, luckily for the company he left, never reſumed his ſeat. *Harry Hair-brain*, one of his intimates, juſt at that juncture, deſcended from his *phaeton* with the agility of a harlequin, gave him a thump upon the breaſt, and accompanied the friendly ſalutation with, "Yo, ho, "*George Boozewell*, are you there, my "heart of oak?—Give me your fiſt, my "pretty piece of *entire*—How came you "in that bunting road-grinder?—That's a "helliſh way of travelling, by the lord "*Harry*—I thought you was a fellow of "better taſte than to ſhut yourſelf up in "ſuch a low-life machine, and keep ſuch "ſneaking company. But come along "with me, *George*, come along, cockey, "and I'll trundle you to town with a pair "of the prettieſt, *beſt bred things* that ever

"wagged

"wagged their buttocks in a harneſs.
"Mine are all *New-market* tits, damme;
"I ſcorn to travel with any that have not
"won at leaſt half a dozen plates." *Harry* cloſed this ſpeech with another thump, and performed the exerciſe of the whip like an experienced driver, and, during the ſeveral vibrations of it, uttered tones and expreſſions chiefly calculated for the intellects of his ſteeds—*George* heard his friend's ſpirited ſpeech, though he did not much like the accompanyment, with great delight, and made this reply.—"Thankee,
"thankee, my buff, I'll take you at your
"word, for I have had a d—n—d murry
"jumble with a pack of as queer devils
"as ever G—d put life into. I muſt get
"you to ſtay till I have gargled my throat
"with a little *bumbo*, for there's a ſon of
"a b—h has almoſt poiſoned me with the
"*fluvies* of his ſnuff-box." "Oy, oy," ſaid *Hairbrain*, "with all my heart, a quarter
"of an hour will break no ſquares. Be-

ſides,

" ſides, now I think of it, a *healer* won't
" be amiſs, for I feel a d—n—d wambling
" in my guts.—I thought you made a
" deviliſh rum figure—What a plague do
" you make ſo many wry faces for, as if
" you was going into a ſal?—I hope Moll
" has'nt peppered you off?—If ſhe has,
" I'm ſorry for it—I have ſmarted enough
" for that brim; whip her, ſays *Roger de*
" *Coverly*—There's a bit of an old ballad
" for you, to ſhew you I have not forgot
" my muſic. Yo, ho, landlord, what
" news? what! nothing ſtirring—Oic—
" oic—oic—no rapes, no murders, no
" fires?—There we ſpin along, damme,
" and leave every body behind us—What!
" are ye all aſleep in this part of the
" world?"—They then went to the bar,
*George* for his *bumbo*, and *Harry* for a half
pint bumper of *uſquebaugh*, the bottom of
which, after he had diſlodged a quid from
a ſnug corner of his mouth, he ſaw, al-
moſt as ſoon as he applied it to his lips.

" Yo ho,

"Yo ho, landlord," ſaid he, "where did "you get this curſed ſtuff?—The fellow "who ſerves you, uſes you bloody ill, tell "him, damn him, I ſay ſo. I ſuppoſe I "ſhall be hellhiſhly griped bye and bye, "but it can't be *hop'd*, I have toſſed it "down, and it muſt find its way out "ſome-how." He then deſired his friend to heave himſelf into the chaiſe, jumped into it after him, and quitted the inn-yard, in an erect poſture, with the alacrity of a *jehu*, driving for a wager.

When *Boozewell* and *Hairbrain* were out of ſight, and out of hearing, *Harriot*, and her companions, who had before only expreſſed their joy at the removal of the former, by nods, winks, and ſhrugs, vented their thoughts freely about him. "I never," ſaid *Harriot*, "ſaw the *fribble* "and the *porter* ſo whimſically and diſagree-"ably united in one man. To ſee him, "one would think he had been bred in "the purlieus of *St. James's*, but to hear "him

" him, you would imagine he had been " educated in the hundreds of *Drury*." " Very true, ma'am," ſaid the antiquated fop, " he is one of the oddeſt creatures I " ever beheld, ſince I knew the uſe of my " optics. The fellow's head is *bien coiffé*, " and his cloaths are made in taſte, but " his converſation is intolerable; it is, ab- " ſolutely, fit only for the *canaille*, the " very dregs of the creation. I am pro- " digiouſly glad he has thought proper " to withdraw, for he is, poſitively, ſhock- " ing to the laſt degree. Lard Gad, " what a monſtrous figure he would make " at Lady *Foppington's* aſſembly! where " the moſt delicate ſentiments, expreſſed " in the moſt delicate manner, are only " whiſpered through the poliſhed circle. " Nothing *groſſier*, nothing to hurt the " moſt refined ear, ever tranſpires there." " Your obſervation is very juſt," ſaid the old gentleman, in a fretful tone, " ſuch a " fellow makes a bad figure every where.

" He will never hit upon a ſcheme to pay
" off the national debt, and leſſen the
" number of our taxes, I dare ſwear—
" Such wretches know nothing of the
" matter, how ſhould they? They take no
" pains to make themſelves acquainted
" with the intereſts of their country.
" Though, I confeſs, he who takes the
" moſt pains to be of ſervice to it, meets
" with poor encouragement, becauſe there
" is ſuch a pack of—— at the helm, that
" if a man tells them they will ſink the
" ſhip, and points out a method to ſave
" her, they look upon him as an officious
" buſy-body, and throw cold water on all
" his public-ſpirited propoſals. For my
" part, d'ye ſee, I have met with ſuch ill
" treatment from the m—n—y, for en-
" deavouring to rectify their blunders,
" and to hinder them from knocking their
" heads againſt a poſt, that I ſhall keep
" myſelf to myſelf for the future, and
" take care of number one. Let them

" grope

" grope in a wood, and be d—n—d, I
" ſay.—I have told them how to ſave the
" nation from ruin, but they won't hear
" reaſon. I can't beat it into them. So
" I have done with them. It makes me
" deviliſh mad, though, to ſee our liber-
" ties and properties at ſtake, while a
" handful of greedy, ſelfiſh *Scotch* raſ-
" cals are plundering the nation to fill
" their private purſes.—Poor *England!*
" thou art in a moſt miſerable condition,
" that's the truth—Bribery and corrup-
" tion prey upon thy vitals—Luxury is
" the foundation of all national calamities.
" People, who live beyond their incomes,
" muſt condeſcend to do dirty work, in
" order to ſupport their extravagant taſte,
" becauſe they are aſhamed to live worſe
" than they have done. They muſt ſell
" themſelves to the great man, attend his
" levee like a ſlave, cringe to him as if
" he was ſomething more than human,
" if they expect to have honours and

" riches conferred upon them. But I
" have a very mean opinion of ſuch mi-
" niſterial tools. Thank God I can live
" upon a turnip, and ſcorn ſuch bondage.
" I have too high a notion of the dignity
" of human nature, to be a ſupple ſyco-
" phant to any great man, any golden
" idol, or gilded calf—and procure his fa-
" vour by increaſing the number of his
" dependants. Rather than ſtoop ſo low,
" I would earn every meal I eat, with the
" labour of my brain, or the ſweat of
" my brow—If every body was of my
" mind, I can tell you, good folks, the
" nation would be in a far better plight
" than it is—But things will never mend,
" as long as ſelf-intereſt gets the better of
" public virtue. I ſee how our affairs are
" managed, and wiſh they were in a more
" proſperous ſituation. The times are
" very bad, very bad, indeed, and ſo
" they muſt be till there is a revolution

" at——

" at———, which, I hope, I ſhall live " to ſee, though I am turned ſixty."—

To this long and diſcontented ſpeech, Mrs. *Archer*, that was the old lady's name, made the following ſenſible reply, with great compoſure: " The preſent age is " not a *golden* one, I allow, but I don't " think it is an *iron* one, neither.—We are " too apt to rail againſt our own times " with vehemence, only becauſe they are " our own. The preſent times are not " remarkably pure, but, pray, ſir, con- " ſider how much worſe thoſe were of " which we now talk with ſo many enco- " miums.—For my part, whenever I feel " in myſelf a propenſity to complain of " the preſent times, I take the *Hiſtory of* " *England*, and draw, from that, a great " deal of comfort; particularly, when I " read the accounts of *Mary's* perſecutions, " and the bloody conteſt between *Charles* " and his parliament: and never lay down " my book without chiding myſelf for

" grumbling (for I am ſometimes inclined " that way) againſt the government, and " reflecting on our national affairs with " gloomineſs and deſpondency."

" You are indubitably in the right, " madam," ſaid Mr. *Solemn*, the young academic, " to reaſon on our political tran- " ſactions without perturbation, and I " wiſh I could ruminate on them with " equal tranquillity. But, I confeſs, while " luxury and gaming are the vices in " vogue, I can extract no conſolation " from the peruſal of a hiſtory concerning " times more deplorable than our own; " becauſe we are, I think, advancing, with " haſty ſtrides, to the gulph of deſtruction. " This is, however, too mournful a ſub- " ject; let us, therefore, change it to a " more exhilarating one." " Aye, aye," ſaid Mr. *Problem*, " mournful enough, God " knows; but it is very intereſting for all " that, ſir, let me tell you, ſir, and ought " to be conſidered with ſerioufneſs and at-

" tention;

" tention; for if things go on in this way,
" from bad to worſe, I don't know what
" will become of us; we ſhall certainly be
" in a very beggarly condition, thanks to
" the wiſe and upright men, who ſkulk
" behind the ſcenes, and make us pay
" through the noſe for ſeeing a miſerable
" farce performed by their puppets. They
" don't care a pipe of tobacco, not they,
" for the nation, if they can but feather
" their own neſts. Adrabbit it, I can't
" bear to think how we are bamboozled.
" It makes my blood boil to ſee the pub-
" lic money ſquandered away in ſo ſcan-
" dalous a manner. We are loaded with
" taxes—I wonder what the devil they
" will tax next! Yet nothing is done
" with the immenſe ſums which are an-
" nually ſqueezed out of the pockets of
" thoſe who can but juſt make a ſhift to
" live from hand to mouth. Nothing is
" done to the purpoſe. Not a ſouſe is
" laid out for the good of the nation.

"But the money all goes here, there, and "every where—but where it ſhould go.—"What ſay *you*, ſir, to all theſe things?" continued he, to the antiquated beau. "Faith, ſir," replied he, "I never—"yaw—aw—aw—think about politicks. "It makes my head ready to ſplit, to "give the leaſt ya—w—yaw—attention "to ſo knotty a ſubject. I amuſe myſelf, "chiefly, after I am dreſſed fit to ſhew "myſelf in the beſt company, with the "play bills, novels, and *petites pieces fu-*"*gitives*, which one may read and take "ſnuff all the while; pretty parlour-win-"dow books.—For I have ſuch an infinite "number of engagements, from morning "to night, particularly among the fair "ſex, that I have no leiſure to ſit moping "over a volume, which one muſt abſo-"lutely drudge at, in order to find out "the author's meaning. But novels are "the prettieſt books in the univerſe! One "may ſkim a few pages without the leaſt "fatigue."

" fatigue." He then beat a little tattoo upon his ſnuff-box, loaded his noſe with half a handful of its contents, and thus went on: " Will you regale your noſtrils, " ſir, with a pinch of the moſt exquiſite " rappee that was ever imported from " *France?* It has the true *Paris* flavour, " upon my honour."—" No, no," cried Mr. *Problem*, in a peeviſh tone, " I have no- " thing to do with *French* manufactures, " and nonſenſical romances: I wonder " how ſcribblers have the aſſurance to ſit " down, and invent ſuch a pack of con- " founded lies.—Give me facts.—Some- " thing I can depend upon.—Hiſtory, hi- " ſtory; that's the ſtudy fit for a man.— " Your ſtory-books, full of intrigues and " mad adventures, ought to be burnt by " the hangman, for they only teach people " to do what they ſhould not, and they are " ready enough to do that without being " taught. I don't doubt but many young " men, and young women, are debauched

" by

" by them, for the matter of that. They " are ſpecial friends to *Covent-Garden* and " *Newgate*: ſpecial receipts to make " whores and rogues." " You condemn " novels," replied *Solemn*, " with too much " impetuoſity, and cenſure them with too " much ſeverity.—Three fourths of thoſe " compoſitions, which annually iſſue from " the preſs, are, indeed, not fit for the " inſpection of either ſex: eſpecially thoſe " in the *aurora* of life; and therefore " might, with great propriety, be ſacrificed " to *Vulcan* by the public executioner. " But all novels deſerve not ſuch a ſen- " tence: there are ſeveral written with a " laudable intention, and are ſure of a laſt- " ing reputation; conceived with fancy, " and executed with judgment. If they " were all like the adventures of *Tele-* " *machus*, the authors of them would be " juſtly entitled to the higheſt eulogies. " That book is worth its weight in gold— " It is full of amuſement, and, at the

" ſame

"ſame time, replete with inſtruction: it "may be read, with equal pleaſure and "profit, by the beardleſs ſtripling, and "the hoary ſage; the wrinkled matron, "and the blooming maid. But a *Fenelon* "only makes his appearance once in a "century."—"Well, well," ſaid *Problem*, "you may talk till you are black in the "face, it doesn't ſignify three farthings, "you can never bring me to your way of "thinking. One book about the good "of the nation is worth all the romances "under the ſun. As for the adventures "you mention, I read them when I was a "younker, but between you and I—— Here Mr. *Problem* was obliged to make a full ſtop, for *Whipwell* did the ſame at the laſt ſtage, who was welcomed with many a hearty ſhake by his ſtable companions, at the old inn, on his arrival. *Harriot* was overjoyed to find herſelf at the end of her journey, though the amuſement ſhe received from her fellow-travellers had made her

her forget the odiouſneſs of the machine. After the cuſtomary compliments were exchanged, a repetition of which would only ſwell the ſize of my volume, without entertaining or edifying the readers of it, ſhe removed into a *hack*, with *Betty* and her bundles, and ordered the coachman to drive to *Hill-ſtreet*, with as much expedition as he could, without endangering her life. The neceſſity ſhe was under of going home in a hackney coach hurt her, for ſhe was ſtrongly affected by appearances, and was weak enough to bluſh at getting out of ſo vulgar a vehicle—A ſmart poſt-chariot, rattling along with ſpirit, would have been *the thing*.—What ridiculous ſacrifices are made, every day, to appearance! and to what trouble and expence do we perpetually put ourſelves to be laughed at!—To make a figure in the world ſuperior to what we really can afford, we go through a thouſand difficulties; and there are inſtances,

ſtances, without number, of people of both ſexes, who almoſt *ſtarve* themſelves at home, to make their acquaintance *ſtare* whenever they go abroad.—The abſurdity of ſuch people is too ſtriking to be enlarged upon; I ſhall, therefore, cloſe my reflections, and throw my heroine into a new ſituation.

*END of the* THIRD BOOK.

MEMOIRS

# MEMOIRS

OF

# A COQUET.

## BOOK IV.

I HAVE but ſlightly touched the character of Mr. *Airy*; a few more ſtrokes will give the reader a better view of him. He had ſtrong parts, and ſtrong paſſions; extremely humane and benevolent. Extravagantly fond of his daughter: he was ſo blinded by her beauties, that he ſaw none of her defects;

fects; ſuch partiality is common, but it is wrong. Mrs. *Airy* was a woman of plain ſenſe, and a pliant diſpoſition, but as blind as her huſband to the blemiſhes of her daughter. So that as *Harriot* was idolized both by her father and her mother, and as there was no other child in the family to divide their attention, it is no wonder that ſhe thought herſelf of more conſequence than ſhe really was. To the abſurd conduct of parents, (the obſervation cannot be too often repeated) the abſurd figure which their children make in the world muſt, in a great meaſure, be attributed. The editor of theſe memoirs would have thought his time very ill employed, if he had only written a mere narrative. It is the ſentimental part on which he lays the greateſt ſtreſs, and which, he hopes, will be moſt attended to by thoſe for whoſe uſe it was principally deſigned. If *one* coquet is convinced of the folly of her conduct, by the peruſal of theſe ſheets, from

the

the reflections ſcattered through them, the *reflector* will not think, that he has miſ-employed his talents, or his time. Not merely to fill up a vacant hour, but, in that vacant hour, to promote wiſdom, and encourage virtue, ſhould be the aim of every author: without that aim, a more trifling character cannot exiſt.

Mr. *Airy*, during *Harriot's* ſtay with his ſiſter, at *Bounty-Hall*, had contracted an intimacy with a young gentleman, whom he met with at a coffee-houſe in the neighbourhood; and was very fond of his company, becauſe no ſubject ever came amiſs to him, and becauſe their ſentiments were, generally, the ſame. It is very natural to like thoſe beſt who think as we do, but it is wrong. We ſhould have no prepoſſeſſions, prejudices, and partialities, but patiently hear, and carefully examine, all the parts of an argument, before we pronounce ſentence on the whole. We ſhould never be too precipitate in contracting in-

timacies.—We ſhould never ſuffer ourſelves to be cheated by a few flaſhy accompliſhments in thoſe whom chance throws in our way, and admit them into the liſt of our friends, without a ſtrict enquiry into their general conduct. This precaution is doubly neceſſary in the father of a family, otherwiſe he may introduce, under the maſk of friendſhip, a ſharper, or a highwayman.

Mr. *Melliſh* had many perſonal blemiſhes, and by no means a ſtriking figure; but he talked away all thoſe blemiſhes in half an hour. He could, like *Belial*, make the worſe, appear the better, reaſon, and in all the arts of adulation, was excelled by none.—He wormed himſelf into the eſteem of Mr. *Airy*, by his inſinuating addreſs, and plauſible behaviour; and, by the ſame methods, made no ſmall impreſſion on the heart of his daughter. *Harriot* thought every man, who ſaid civil things to her, was a lover, and treated

him

him as one, without making any enquiry into his life and character.——She was charmed with the honied accents which flowed from the lips of *Melliſh*; very readily believed, that all his flowery ſpeeches came from the heart, and was never ſo happy as when her ears were regaled with them.—It is this ſort of credulity, by which many well-meaning girls are plunged into perplexing difficulties. When vanity throws a miſt before the intellectual eye, the corporeal one is equally bedimmed, and ſees every thing through a falſe medium. To the vain, every motion of the eye is a look of love, every ſmile a mark of affection, and every polite compliment a proof of ſincerity. Men of the town, when they are chatting with girls of this ſtamp, always take care to make uſe of *double entendres*, which, like the antient oracles, or *French treaties*, may be conſtrued two oppoſite ways. They know in what manner their words will be inter-

preted, before they utter them, and therefore very cautiouſly ſecure a retreat, while the vain creatures, who greedily liſten to them, think they are making their advances.

*Melliſh* ſoon found that *Harriot* had talents ſuperior to the majority of females, and behaved to her accordingly.—Coquetting, he as ſoon found, was her ruling paſſion, and was determined to entertain himſelf with it. He did not treat her with the whip-ſyllabub, the ridiculous ſmall talk which is commonly ſo agreeable to moſt females. He knew that ſhe piqued herſelf on her mental accompliſhments, and therefore ſtudied, by the moſt refined flattery, to make her believe that he ſet a very high value on them, and that he regarded her with a particular veneration and eſteem on their account. He was, like *Waller's Thyrſis*, a youth of the inſpired train, and often attacked her with the ſoft ſentiments of an *Otway*, in the harmonious

harmonious language of a *Rowe*. To ſay he was a woman's man, is not to ſay enough. That name is given to every dangler after a petticoat. He was as much ſuperior to thoſe *things*, or rather *nothings*, as a *man* is to a *monkey*. He was, in one word, a *Sedley*, that is, a charming fellow, and very well qualified to ſeduce a whole convent of ſeraphic veſtals, and melt them into mere women.

*Harriot* was ſo intoxicated with the thoughts of having conquered the heart of a man of ſenſe—for the compliments he paid to her underſtanding, convinced her, that he had a great deal of diſcernment—that ſhe forgot to aſk herſelf, whether ſhe had reaſon to think ſhe had made ſuch a conqueſt, and gave the tattling world too fair an opportunity to tax her with indiſcretions. She accepted of his tickets for concerts, danced with him at balls, and ſuffered him to treat her at operas and plays; and encouraged many

familiarities, both at home and abroad, which, though not indecent, were very improper. The prudent reader will naturally aſk, why her father and mother permitted her to go about with a man, in ſo public a way, who had not diſcovered the leaſt inclination to make ſerious propoſals? Mr. *Airy* and his wife were worthy, good people, of plain parts, with little knowledge of the world, and thought every body they met with as worthy, as undeſigning as themſelves—An amiable, but a dangerous failing! They idolized their daughter, and had too high an opinion of her, to ſuppoſe that ſhe wanted a monitor at her elbow wherever ſhe went. They had no penetration. They were ſatisfied with the conſciouſneſs of acting right, according to their own ideas of rectitude, without troubling themſelves about the conſtruction which the world would put upon their actions. They meant well, but they acted abſurdly. The

opinion

opinion of the world is of more conſequence than people generally imagine, and ſhould never be ſlighted. The *beſt* often ſully their characters by the careleſſneſs, and the *worſt* often make themſelves reſpected by the diſcreetneſs, of their deportment.

*Harriot* made herſelf ridiculous by her behaviour to *Melliſh*, near a twelvemonth, before ſhe had the leaſt conception that he was making a fool of her. After ſhe had thoroughly expoſed herſelf among all her acquaintance, her eyes were opened.—She called one morning on a young lady whom ſhe viſited, to deſire her company in the evening, and found *Melliſh* with her *dans une attitude galante*. To ſee him with the laſt perſon in the world with whom ſhe thought he could bear the fatigue of a *tête a tête*, excited her aſtoniſhment. The attitude in which ſhe ſurpriſed him, mortified her extremely, and would have fired any girl, in her ſitua-

tion, with jealouſy. She ſtared a-while, firſt on him, and then on her friend, unable to ſpeak or move. At laſt, recovering both ſpeech and motion, her rage and grief found a rapid paſſage. "Bleſs "me, Mr. *Melliſh!* why do I ſee you here? "and why ſo particularly engaged with a "woman whom you have told me, a thou-"ſand times, you heartily deteſted? What "can I think of your words, when they "are at ſuch variance with your actions?" "Have a moment's patience, madam," replied he, with a moſt inſolent compoſure, "and I will unfold a tale which—your "little expect' to hear.—This lady is my "wife—We have been married almoſt a "year, but have, for ſeveral private rea-"ſons, kept our marriage a ſecret. We "now find it prudent to unmaſk, and to "appear as we really are."—This ſpeech, delivered with the tranquillity of a ſtoic, extorted a much more ſpirited one from *Harriot*. "Ungrateful wretch! Have

"you

" you, then, been all this time exulting at
" the thoughts of making me contemp-
" tible in the eye of the world, by the
" baſeſt actions ?—for who can act more
" baſely than thoſe who lead a life of diſ-
" ſimulation, and never open their lips
" but to deceive; to make their hearers
" believe they utter nothing but the
" truth, and to take advantage of their
" credulity with the moſt barbarous un-
" concern ? Your behaviour to me is
" neither to be equalled nor juſtified—
" Any body, in my ſituation, would have
" been as credulous—ſo artfully did you
" play the hypocrite—and would have
" imagined, that your tongue ſpoke the
" language of your heart.—I now ſee my
" folly, and repent—You are the firſt man
" by whom I have been ſo deceived, and
" you ſhall be the laſt; for, from this mo-
" ment, I declare war againſt your whole
" ſex, and will never give another man
" an opportunity of triumphing over
" my

" my good-nature, and poſt me for a fool.
" But I blame myſelf, as much as I con-
" demn you—*I* have acted a weak, but
" *you* a wicked part—Experience is a ſe-
" vere miſtreſs, but ſhe makes her ſcho-
" lars truly wiſe.—Farewell—Both of you
" are beneath my notice, for both have
" conſpired to wound alike my reputation
" and repoſe."

*Harriot* then left the happy pair to enjoy their triumph, and went home full of vexation, to think how groſsly ſhe had been duped, and how contemptibly treated.—The uneaſineſs ſhe felt was conſiderably increaſed when ſhe reflected on her own conduct. For, on a calm recollection of the tranſactions which had paſſed between *Melliſh* and herſelf, during their intimacy, ſhe could not thereby " heal her " unquiet mind," nor receive any inward ſatisfaction. She felt herſelf a fool, and that ſenſation almoſt drove her to diſtraction. She retired to her cloſet. She coloured,

loured, though nobody was preſent to behold her bluſhes. She loſt her vivacity. She fretted herſelf ſick. Her pride was hurt, and her conſequence leſſened. The ſighs which ſhe heaved came from a heart ready to burſt with envy and indignation, jealouſy and grief.—She had played a ſilly game, and had preſumed too much on her own powers. "I deſerve the diſ-"appointment I have met with," ſaid ſhe, "for my behaviour to *Pike*—'Tis fit I "ſhould ſuffer for my indiſcretion."—A woman ſhould be extremely cautious when ſhe ſets up for a coquet. She cannot be too much upon her guard. The reaſon is obvious.—A woman has every thing to loſe—Cuſtom, whoſe decrees are not to be diſputed, has ſo ordered it—and a man nothing.—What is folly and raſhneſs in *her*, is only fire, ſpirit, and gallantry in *him*.

Such is the cuſtom of the world; but ſurely it is not to be ſeriouſly defended—

He

He who injures the character of a woman, glories in his triumph over her credulity, and avails himſelf of the cuſtom of the world, to commit actions, for which (tho' not puniſhable by the laws) he deſerves a halter, is a dangerous member of ſociety, and the more dangerous, becauſe he adopts the virtues of an angel, in order to execute the vices of a devil.

*Harriot*, as ſhe was ſo deeply affected with the ſudden deſertion of *Melliſh*, would have certainly gone into a declining way, and rendered herſelf unable to excite "envy in woman, or deſire in man," if an invitation from a Lady, who was very intimate with the *Airy-Family*, to ſpend a few weeks with her in *Eſſex*, had not ſeaſonably arrived, to ſuſpend her uneaſy ſenſations, and to turn her thoughts into a more agreeable channel.

Whenever we meet with any diſappointment, whenever the mind receives a blow, and is deprived of its uſual tranquillity,

quillity, changing the ſcene is the beſt method we can take to forget the diſappointment and reſtore its peace.—New ſcenes, images and objects, by attracting our eyes, turn our thoughts into another channel, and if we can turn the current of our thoughts, our buſineſs is done. It is the dwelling on diſagreeable reflections, excited by the objects before them, which drives ſo many people, under the preſſure of a diſappointment, into the depths of deſpair.

Mrs. *Mildmay*, that was the lady's name, was a widow in eaſy circumſtances, and unincumbered with children. She was one of the moſt entertaining women in the world. In her perſon, though in the autumn of life, ſhe had charms enough to ſtagger the reſolution of a ſtoic, and make him feel ſome twitches of the tender paſſion; but ſhe had always been more ſollicitous to decorate her mind with the moſt elegant and uſeful furniture. She had

had read many books, and ſo thoroughly digeſted her intellectual food, that ſhe was never ſurfeited, but ſtrengthened. She read for improvement as well as pleaſure, was particularly nice in the choice of thoſe authors who amuſed the fancy without corrupting the heart. How few female readers follow this good lady's example! I am ſorry to be ſevere upon the fair ſex; but cannot help ſaying, that the majority of your reading girls, who ſwallow novels as greedily as adulation, have appetites reſembling that of a glutton. Like him they devour whatever comes in their way, with an undiſtinguiſhing voracity, and as *he* fills his body with a thouſand malignant diſtempers, ſo do *they* cram their little heads with a thouſand erroneous notions and indelicate ideas.

Mrs. *Mildmay* was of a very communicative diſpoſition, and practiced all the virtues of humanity, not from oſtentation but

but principal.—She had but one fault; a fault which, in two thirds of her ſex, would have been inſupportable. She was apt, in company, to engroſs the converſation, and to deliver her thoughts in too peremptory and deciſive a manner, on the ſubject debated. She happened, indeed, to be generally in the right; but a failing of this kind, though it may be borne, cannot be defended. It is impoſſible to have talents ſuperior to the common run of mankind, without feeling our ſuperiority, and not very eaſy to conceal it. In a man of bright parts, I can bear a little vanity in the diſplay of them—but the vanity of a fool is not to be endured.

*Harriot*, when ſhe arrived at her friend's villa, did not know which to admire moſt, the beauty of the building, or the pleaſantneſs of its ſituation. It was a ſmall edifice, but ſo gracefully plain, ſo elegantly neat, and adorned with ſo much ſimplicity, that it charmed her at the firſt

glance

glance of her eye, more than any ſtructure ſhe had ever beheld of the ſame ſize. The ornaments *within* correſponded with thoſe *without*. There was no gaudineſs in the furniture, no whimſical ſingularity in the diſpoſition of it: every thing was plain, neat, elegant and graceful.

The ſituation of this *Villa* greatly contributed to render it a deſirable retreat. Hills and vallies, woods and lawns, fields and meadows *ſweetly interchanged*, ſurrounded it on all ſides, and feaſted the wandering eye with a variety of pleaſing proſpects and pictureſque views: while our majeſtic river, rolling his tranſlucent waves in the midſt, enriched the whole ſcene, and made each particular ſpot more delightful.

Mrs. *Mildmay*, in the management of her domeſtic affairs, was an excellent œconomiſt, and always prudently ſteered between the two extremes of penury and profuſion. How few are able to hit this happy

happy medium! Her table was always covered with a plentiful quantity of the beſt proviſions; but as ſhe had a rooted averſion to all the wanton refinements in cookery, no inflammatory diſhes ever made their appearance. As ſhe preferred the moſt ſalutary viands to thoſe of a pernicious kind, *luxury* never found an aſylum under her roof.— Her intentions were good, but her taſte was totally unfaſhionable.

This *villa* was rendered ſtill more agreeable to *Harriot*, by the ſociety of two young ladies, Miſs *Sukey*, and Miſs *Fanny Martin*, whom ſhe found there. They were nieces to Mrs. *Mildmay*, and her conſtant companions. She loved them as if they had been her own children, and they well deſerved her fondeſt affection. Two more amiable girls never exiſted. In their perſons they were far from being diſagreeable, but they were chiefly, for the gentleneſs of their manners, the affa-

bility of their behaviour, the modeſty of their deportment, and their converſible talents, admired, reſpected, and eſteemed by all who were acquainted with them.—They were both, in every reſpect, worthy, ſenſible, and good-humoured, but were very different from each other in their diſpoſitions—*Sukey* was of a grave, *Fanny* of a lively turn—but *Fanny's* livelineſs never ſparkled into levity, nor did *Sukey's* gravity ever ſink into gloom. They were ſeparately entertaining companions, but appeared to moſt advantage in converſation together.—They had both been very politely educated, by the diſcretion of their aunt, who took them under her protection, when they were left orphans in their infancy. They danced gracefully, played upon the harpſichord, ſung with a genteel *manner*, and drew landſcapes which were well-fancied, and executed with judgment. They were acquainted with all the modes and cuſtoms of the faſhionable world, and knew

knew the *French* and *Italian* languages as intimately as their mother tongue. *Sukey* was the moſt accompliſhed girl; for, beſides the above-mentioned attainments, ſhe had ſtudied the beſt *Roman Claſſics*, and could not only read, but reliſh, *Don Quixote* in the original:—She had alſo a fine genius for poetry, and wrote, on all occaſions, in verſe and proſe, with ſpirit, and with eaſe. But with all theſe attainments, they were equally able and willing to perform the domeſtic duties—They knew how to cut out ſhifts, as well as to dance minuets, and were as happy in uſing their needles, as our modern fine ladies are in throwing them away. Here and there we find an extraordinary female who thinks of making herſelf at the ſame time uſeful and agreeable: but a female of this ſtamp is as rare as ſincerity in a ſtateſman, or humility in an author.

With this amiable lady, and theſe accompliſhed girls, *Harriot*, who had herſelf

many valuable and attracting qualifications, ſpent her time very agreeably. She was amuſed from morning to night; for as Mrs. *Mildmay* and her nieces were univerſally careſſed, they were perpetually receiving viſits from their neighbours, or returning them.

While *Harriot* and her companions were diverting themſelves one morning in the garden, after breakfaſt, a lively intimate of theirs, who lived about a mile from them, tripped into the walk they were in, and ſaluted them with one of the moſt chearful and melodious good-morrows that ever iſſued from a female throat. They flew to receive her with open arms, and, with equal chearfulneſs, returned her ſalutation.

Before I tell you this lady's errand, gentle reader, I muſt crave your patience for a few minutes, till I have given you ſome account of thoſe, to whom ſhe was beholden for her exiſtence.

Miſs

Miſs *Sybilla Jennings* was the daughter of a gentleman, poſſeſſed of a large eſtate, in a very plentiful part of the kingdom, but choſe to reſide in that county, for ſome particular advantages which he could not have met with in any other. He was a good-humoured, roaring, honeſt country gentleman, not over-burdened with ſenſe, nor yet a downright fool. He made many ſhrewd obſervations, and ſometimes puzzled, with the acuteneſs of his remarks, the vicar himſelf.

Mr. *Jennings* was of a very hoſpitable diſpoſition, and, once a week, kept open houſe; by which means he never wanted company or amuſement. His ſupreme delight was, to invite half a dozen odd, out-of-the-way characters, oppoſite to each other in their principles and manners, and to puſh the bottle about, till they had juſt drank enough to give a free looſe to their humours.

Mrs. *Jennings* was a woman of a very different turn: much ſuperior to her huſband in underſtanding, but wanted all the good qualities of the heart, which he poſſeſſed.—In moſt things, they were *antipodes*. *He* was generous—*She*, frugal to a fault—*He* loved to ſee his houſe full of people; *ſhe* was very glad when ſhe could handſomely get rid of them. *He* was of a mild, pacific diſpoſition; *ſhe*, extremely addicted to iraſcibility. After this deſcription of them, 'tis needleſs to ſay, they were an unſuitable couple.

*Sybilla*, their daughter, was ſo unlike either father or mother, that nobody, without being told, would ever have imagined that ſhe was ſo cloſely allied to them. A prating, hoydening, open-hearted, joyous creature as ever breathed—but as wild as wind—All life and ſpirits, *toujours gai*, blythe and debonnair; not handſome, but ſo very agreeable, that ſhe was as much followed,

followed, in all public places, as the moſt regular *beauty*, by the young fellows who were charmed with her chatty humour, and gazed on her ſpirited features, " until " their eye-lids could no longer wag."— She was tall, but not a may-pole—She had gracefully-falling ſhoulders, elegantly-formed hands and arms, and an eaſy ſhape. —Her neck was, indeed, rather too long— but with good teeth, good hair, and her other perſonal advantages, ſhe ſtruck every body *altogether*, and nobody, who viewed her whole figure, ever thought of examining particular parts.—

'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,
But the joint force and full reſult of all.

She was a girl of infinite humour, and very entertaining. Nothing of the *ridiculous* eſcaped her notice, and ſhe had a moſt diverting way of ſetting it off in a variety of lights.

"Come, my dear creatures," ſaid ſhe to *Harriot* and the *Martins*, "you muſt dine "with us to-day, for there will be as merry "a comedy performed at our houſe, this "afternoon, as you ever ſaw upon the "the ſtage: and I dare ſwear you will "laugh very heartily at the characters you "will be introduced to, and the drollery "of their behaviour. Such a groupe "would have been a feaſt to *Old Ben*, and "have given him a fine opportunity to "diſplay his comic powers.—Don't you "think *Ben's* a charming writer?—I doat "upon him."—"*Ben*, to be ſure," ſaid Miſs *Martin*, "was a very maſterly writer, "and had a ſtrong idea of *humour*; he "was an accurate obſerver of mankind, "and exhibited their follies and vices in a "ſtriking light. But though I allow *Ben* "a great deal of merit, *Shakeſpeare* is *my* "favourite."——"Oh, well, well," ſaid Miſs *Jennings*, "with all my heart, I don't "care who you like beſt; I have'nt time

"to

" to diſpute about the merit of dramatic
" writers, I have ſomething elſe to do—
" I muſt go and help my *mamma* to make
" preparations for her extraordinary
" gueſts.—But you hav'nt told me whe-
" ther you will come."—" Yes, yes," re-
plied Miſs *Martin*, " we will all come,
" though, I think, it won't be amiſs to
" conſult my aunt on this occaſion: ſhe
" is ſo kind to us, that we ought to do
" nothing without her conſent."—" You
" may ſave yourſelf that trouble, my
" dear," ſaid Miſs *Jennings*, " for I aſked
" her to be of the party before I came
" into the garden, and ſhe likes the invi-
" tation prodigiouſly.—She is very fond,
" ſhe ſays, of odd characters, and ex-
" pects to be highly entertained." " But
" won't you give us," ſaid *Sally Martin*,
" ſome account of the *dramatis perſonæ*,
" that we may have a notion of the
" play?" " No, no," replied *Sib*, " I
" won't tell you a word about them.

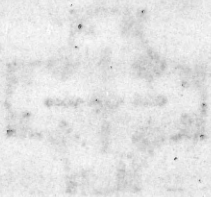
" They

"They are inimitable originals, and will "make you laugh ready to ſplit your "ſides—that's enough.—So, *bon jour*— "I can't ſtay a minute longer—If I do, "I ſhall be ſhockingly ſnubbed by my "lady mother."—"Well, you are a merry "mortal," ſaid Miſs *Martin*, "and always "in tip-top ſpirits."—"Ay, ay, child," ſaid *Sib*, "I hope I ſhall be in ſuch ſpirits "as long as I live—I can't bear thoſe who "ſit like their grandfires cut in alabaſter— "I ſhall be very bad, indeed, when I "ceaſe to be merry—But I ſtand prating "here, like a careleſs thing as I am, while "I have an hundred and fifty——Well— "once more, adieu."——They all then quitted the garden, in order to dreſs for dinner; and Miſs *Sybilla* flew away, like a friſking fawn, to tell her papa and mama, what ſhe had been doing at *Bounty-Hall*, from which, not long afterwards, Mrs. *Mildmay*, with her nieces, and *Harriot*, rolled forth, and pleaſed themſelves not a little,

little, during their ride, with the thoughts of finiſhing the day in a diverting manner. Mrs. *Mildmay* herſelf always entered into the ſpirit of theſe excurſions; and if all old ladies would follow her example, and make themſelves agreeable to the young folks about them, their preſence would never be forbidding; but their company would be courted.

*END of the* FOURTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS



# MEMOIRS
OF
# A COQUET.

## BOOK V.

WHEN Mrs. *Mildmay*, and her young companions, arrived at their neighbour's houſe, they were accoſted at the door by Mr. *Jennings* himſelf, who handed them out with a great deal of awkward, but well-meant, civility, and ſeemed to be quite over-joyed to ſee them. "Well, I proteſt," ſaid he,

"Mrs.

"Mrs. *Mildmay*, this is very kind, very "kind, indeed—I am always wonderfully "glad to ſee you at my houſe, but your "company to-day is particularly accept- "able, I do aſſure you. Your ſervant, "young ladies, your moſt humble ſervant, "ſweet miſſes—I am wonderfully glad to "ſee your ſmiling faces—We ſhall be "pure jolly bye and bye, I warrant— "Ecod, I can tell you I am going to in- "troduce you to as curious a collection of "original pictures, as you ever ſaw in "your life."—As ſoon as the old gentle- man had concluded his hearty ſpeech, the great parlour door was opened, and diſ- covered a very *Hogarthian* groupe. Sir *Gregory Grubb*, with his wife and daughter, Sir *Simon Hubble-bubble* and his lubberly ſon, Dr. *Snip-Snap*, a pert young phyſician, and *Toby Teſty*, Eſq. a choleric and ſoaking juſtice of the peace, who contradicted every body who oppoſed him; and if any perſons, inclining to put an end to a debate

with

with him, aſſented to his opinion, rudely attacked them with, "And ſo, ſir, and "what reaſon have you for being of my "opinion?"——With ſuch a diſputant, there is no dealing.—But to the other characters.—

Sir *Gregory Grubb* was ſhort, fat, and very clumſily built. He had the moſt unmeaning face you ever ſaw. His chubby cheeks were as plump as thoſe of a trumpeter blowing with all his might; and he had a pair of large grey, goggling eyes with which he ſtared as ſtupid as a calf. He was very fond of finery, and never thought himſelf fit to be ſeen, except his cloaths were plaiſtered with lace, of which he was ſo enamoured, that he frequently adorned his coat and waiſt-coat, with gold and ſilver, ſo awkwardly intermixed, that he made the moſt ridiculous figure imaginable.

Lady *Grubb* was, in perſon, an excellent contraſt to her knight. She was tall

and

and lath-like. Her jaws were ſo lank, and her complexion ſo cadaverous, that ſhe made a moſt rueful appearance, and ſeemed to be much fitter for a church-yard than a viſiting-room. Two great teeth ſtuck out of her mouth far beyond the reſt; and, as ſhe always opened that mouth from ear to ear, really looked formidable. Her grins were horrible, and even her ſmiles ghaſtly.

Miſs *Grubb* was a little lump of deformity, but as full of affectation as if ſhe had been the brighteſt beauty that ever ſhone in a ſide-box, or glittered at *Carliſle-houſe*. She had only one eye, but that, like Lady *Pentweazle's*, was a *piercer*: ſhe had a bottle-noſe, ſhe had a hair-lip, and, with theſe imperfections, had all the languiſhing looks and conceited airs of a finiſhed coquet. Notwithſtanding her ugline ſs, ſhe was vain enough to imagine, that every man, who, out of compaſſion, ſometimes ſaid a civil thing to her, was an humble

humble admirer. The homely, awkward, and ſtriking *caricatura* of the female ſex appeared to ſtill greater diſadvantage, by the prepoſterous manner in which ſhe had dreſſed herſelf.—Her mahogany complexion was rendered more conſpicuouſly diſmal and funereal, by the dreary hue of a dark green ſack, the gloom of which was conſiderably thickened by an *olive ſtomacher*, and a large quantity of ribbons of the ſame chearleſs colour.

Sir *Simon Hubble-bubble* was a rough, unpoliſhed creature: a furious politician, but hardly knew which ſide to be of; for ſo great was the confuſion of his thoughts, that every paragraph in a news-paper, relating to public affairs, puzzled his poor head, and made him always at a loſs to know what to ſay about the nation of which he was eternally talking.—His ſon *Peter* was as heavy, both in body and mind, as his father, but never troubled himſelf about politicks—The ſtable and

the dog-kennel attracted all his attention—and while he was in the company of *Sly-boots* and *Jowler*, he never wiſhed for any other.—To be dragged, therefore, into a room full of human creatures was, to him, a puniſhment rather than a pleaſure.—All, therefore, ſuch a chuckle could do at dinner, was to eat and drink—he could ſay nothing—Either of his above-mentioned favourites would have made as good companions.

Dr. *Snipſnap* was a young phyſical ſprout, juſt entering upon the ſtage, and throwing all the importance he could into a conſumptive face, by the help of a buſhy whig.—As he had been brought up at *Cambridge*, he plumed himſelf greatly on his academical education, and looked on the ruſtics about him with a ſovereign contempt.

When Mrs. *Mildmay* entered the room, Sir *Gregory Grubb* waddled up to her, as faſt as his duck legs would carry his enormous

mous body, ſeized on both her hands, and, after ſwinging them about, as if he would ſeparate them from her ſhoulders, ſqueezed them with a great deal of rough heartineſs, and thus accoſted her:——

"Well, as I am a living ſoul, Madam "*Mildmay*, I am mortal glad to ſee you: "I never ſaw you look ſo freſh and ſo "comely: it does one good to ſee you; "but the country air is a powerful fine "thing for people at our time of day. "We are of the family of the *has beens*, "and that's better than the *never was's*— "but we can't eat our cake and have it."

"Oh, no, to be ſure, Sir *Gregory*," ſaid Mrs. *Mildmay*, "you ſay very right; but "I am not ſo childiſh as to cry for my "loſt play-things. I enjoy, thank God, "a large ſhare of health, and a contented "mind; and thoſe who have ſuch bleſ- "ſings can ſee the approach of age with- "out any murmuring and repining."

"Ay, ay," replied Sir *Gregory*, "you ar-

" gufy like a woman of learning; but, for " my part, I don't think ſo much of the " matter—I don't muddle my brains about " what is to come—I want nothing to " come, juſt now, but dinner—for I be- " gin to feel a croaking—Hay, Sir *Simon*, " don't you long to be at it?"—" Oy, " oy, Sir *Gregory*," replied Sir *Simon*, " I " deſire no better ſport now—but come, " come, here it is—come, come—buſtle, " buſtle—there's no time for goſſiping " now."—" Well, well," ſaid Sir *Gregory*, " eating and drinking are two ſpecial " things—I always played a good knife " and fork; all our family had deviliſh " fine ſtomachs, and I have never yet " diſgraced the *Grubbs*, and hope I never " ſhall."—While theſe ſpeeches paſſed be- tween the two knights, the reſt of the company ſeated themſelves, and prepared to do honour to the elegant entertain- ment which Mr. *Jennings* had liberally pro- vided for them. Nothing very material

tranſpired

tranſpired during the circulation of the diſhes; but when thoſe were removed, and way made for bottles and bowls, the table was ſoon in a roar—Punch and wine ſoon raiſed the ſpirits of Sir *Gregory* and Sir *Simon*, the heroes of the day, to a jocular pitch, and not a little exhilerated their ladies, and their young hopes; ſo that they all diſplayed their humours without reſerve, and preſented to the company a very facetious farce, for a comedy is too good a name for their exhibition, which afforded thoſe, who had no ſhare in it, the higheſt diverſion. The whole afternoon was ſpent in peals of laughter.—Mrs. *Mildmay* and her nieces, and *Harriot*, ſhouted, with Mr. *Jennings*, (who played off his characters in a maſterly manner) till their ſides ached; and Mrs. *Jennings* herſelf, notwithſtanding her averſion to a houſe full of company, hollowed as loud, and was as unable to compoſe her muſcles, as the reſt.

A few ſketches of the ſcenes which were preſented, may, perhaps, amuſe the laughter-loving reader; but I have too great a regard for his patience to commit all the converſation to paper.

Miſs *Grubb*, you muſt know, was paſſionately fond of young *Hubble-bubble*; and had not the art of concealing her tenderneſs whenever he was in her ſight. But *Peter* not having the ſame ſenſibility, regarded her with the utmoſt indifference, or, rather, abhorrence.—To conquer that ſtupidity in the lovely object of her affections, was her principal ſtudy, whenever they had an interview, either in public or private.—*Peter*, this afternoon, had, by taking juſt liquor enough to deſtroy the little ſenſes he had, rendered himſelf ſo totally blind to her charms, that the pains ſhe was at to animate him, threw her into the moſt diverting ſituations.—To make her behaviour ſtill more ridiculous, jealouſy lent her aſſiſtance.—She

was

was alarmed for fear *Harriot* and Miſs *Jennings*, who were very aſſiduous about her lover, in order to expoſe him, ſhould divide his attention, and draw him off from her own charms, which ſhe thought ſufficient to fix him.—She cocked her *piercer* at her rivals, by turns, and, at the ſame time, wrinkled her *noſe*, and twiſted her *lip*, in ſo expreſſive a manner, that *Peter* could not help hollowing in her face. This treatment added a fierceneſs to the *firſt*, enlarged the ſize of the *ſecond*, and made the *third* more frightful. In ſhort, "every circumſtance about her was in "convulſions."

While the young folks were thus engaged, the two knights were warmly debating about the affairs of the nation: a ſubject in which they could never agree; for they were as oppoſite to each other in their principles as two men could be. Sir *Simon*, having ſqueezed a great many thouſands out of a place under the govern-

ment, ſtickled vehemently for the miniſtry and all their meaſures, right or wrong.—Sir *Gregory* had a ſnug eſtate, and railled as furiouſly, right or wrong, againſt them. "Don't tell *me*," ſaid Sir *Simon*, "that the nation is in a bad way—all "party, prejudice—'tis as plain as two "and three make ſeven—Don't we go on "without ſupplies?—What the devil would "you have?—Have'nt we got a d—n—d "large quantity of land yonder, there, in "*America*, and a fine fleet of ſhips at "home?—What the devil would you have? "—Was there ever ſuch a glorious peace? "—Adrabbit it, it makes a man mad to "hear a pack of grumbletonians—Why, "there never was a time—no, d—n me— "I'll ſtand to it—there never was better "times; and if you are not contented "with theſe times, you ought to ſtarve.— "I don't underſtand—a pack of grumble-"tonians."—"Well, well," ſaid Sir *Gre-*"*gory*, "you may ſwear till you are black

"in

" in the face—that does not argufy three
" farthings: I ſay the nation is in a rui-
" nation way; and as for your glorious
" peace, I can ſee no glory in it; and as
" for your land, there, beyond ſea—why,
" what is that to me, if I muſt be taxed
" up to the chin at home?—Don't tell me
" of the goodneſs of the times, Sir *Simon*,
" I know better things, the times are
" very tickliſh, and I wiſh they may not
" grow worſe, by the Lord *Harry*—Pen-
" ſions are the ruin of every thing; while
" ſuch leaches ſuck the blood of the na-
" tion, we ſhall never make a figure in
" *Europe*—We ſhall be hooted at by all
" foreigners, with our glorious peace—
" Glorious!—ay, ay—thoſe who made it—
" but mum."—" Oy, oy, Sir *Gregory*, 'tis
" high time to cry mum—You had better
" not ſay any thing againſt the peace, I
" believe—But there's no talking with
" ſuch people.—Z—ds, how ſome folks
" are led by the noſe!—Why, Sir *Gregory*,

" I wonder

"I wonder a man of your ſenſe can liſten "to the ſcurrilous articles which you read "in news-papers—a pack of ſcoundrels, "to ſet people againſt their king and "country! You are too hot, too haſty— "Why, Sir *Gregory*, I will lay you any "wager—but it ſignifies nothing talking "to people who let their paſſions run "away with them; but I'll lay you any "wager, that there never was a ſet of "cleverer heads at the helm, talk what "you will of your P—s, a pack of d—d "hot-brained fellows—No, no, we have "other ſort of men, who know what "they're about—cool, cool, nothing in a "hurry—Od ſo, *Juſtice*," continued he, turning to *Teſty*, "did you know *Tom* "*Chacer?* Ah! poor *Tom*—he has had "many eſcapes, but has done his buſineſs "at laſt.—His horſe flung him, yeſter- "day, and ſpoilt him for hunting—He's "*thrown out* at laſt—Poor *Tom*—He's a "deviliſh loſs to us, for he had the good

"of

" of the nation at heart, and always voted
" right. A little paſſionate; but as ho-
" neſt a fellow as ever lived.—I can tell
" you another piece of news, too—*Muck-*
" *worm*, the great banker, whom every
" body was fond of truſting, becauſe they
" thought his word as good as his bond,
" is gone to the dogs—I thought what he
" would come to—Not a crown in the
" pound—that's all—He was always in
" the oppoſition—that's enough—between
" you and I, he has been a d—m—d
" rogue, and it was high time for him to
" *ſteal away*."—" How!" ſaid *Teſty*, " how!
" Sir *Simon*, are you ſure what you ſay of
" *Muckworm* is true?—I don't believe,
" though I know he loved money, I can't
" think that he would have made a *break*."
" You may think as you pleaſe, Mr. *Ju-*
" *ſtice*," ſaid Sir *Simon*, " but I have a let-
" ter from a friend in *London* who never
" deals in falſe intelligence.—I tell you,
" he has chouſed all his cuſtomers—Why,
" I never

"I never met with ſuch a parcel of un-
"believers in my life—You, and Sir
"*Gregory*, are enough, by G—d, to make
"a parſon ſwear—To diſpute about a
"thing that is as well known as your face
"is at the quarter-ſeſſions."—"Ay, ay,
"Mr. *Juſtice*," ſaid Sir *Gregory*—drily—
"you may take Sir *Simon's* word, cour-
"tiers always ſpeak truth"—"None of
"your ſneers, Sir *Gregory*—none of your
"inuendos"—replied the knight—Z—ds!
"Sir *Gregory*," ſaid *Teſty*, "what is it to
"you whether I believe, or not, what Sir
"*Simon* ſays?—I'll believe what I will for
"all you — none of your advice — you
"have got a wrong ſow by the ear.—
"Pray trouble yourſelf about your own
"affairs—Sir *Simon* is the perſon I was
"ſpeaking to, and it is from Sir *Simon*
"that I expect an anſwer." — "Not ſo
"hot, not ſo hot, my good friend," re-
plied Sir *Gregory*, "I did'nt mean to put
"you in a paſſion—ods boddikins, Sir,

"you

"you take fire like a piece of tinder—I "only ſaid Sir *Simon's* word might be"—"Yes, yes," ſaid *Teſty*, "I know what "you are going to ſay—I have as good "an opinion of Sir *Simon* as you, but how "do you know—*Muckworm's* a man of "reputation, can you prove your words?" "Hey day, hey day, Mr. *Juſtice*," replied Sir *Gregory*, "there is no pleaſing you full "or faſting: are you never to be ſatisfied? "Odſbobs, you are like a hog in a high "wind, you will neither lead nor drive."—"Come, come, my good friends," ſaid Sir *Simon*—"agree, agree—Sir *Gregory*—"Mr. *Juſtice*, don't let us ſquabble about "ſtraws—we met to be ſociable, not to "ſpend the time in diſputes—put the "bowl about, and let us bury all quarrels "there—for my part I hate diſputing as "I hate the Devil."—"Right, Sir *Simon*," ſaid Lady *Grubb*, "I vows and ſwears "you think as I does; for 'tis a burning "ſhame, as I often tells my *Griggy*, to put

"ones

"ones ſelf out of ſort, it makes the face
"ſo red to be in a paſſion, that I can't
"abide it. I always makes it a rule to
"to keep my temper, let what will hap-
"pen—for, to be ſure, that's the only
"way to look well.—Don't I talk very
"ſenſible to-day, my dear *Griggy?*—You
"knows you be my darling, and you
"knows I mind what you ſay to me."
"Yes, yes, Lady *Grubb*, you and I are a
"pair of your *raro avis*, your *non-pariles*—
"we can live comfortable enough upon
"the intereſt of forty thouſand pounds,
"and are fit company for the moſt *grandee*
"people."—"Ay, ay," ſaid my lady,
"and with our two thouſand pounds a
"a year, in the *Weſt*, we need not be
"aſhamed of ſhewing our faces any
"where." "True, child," ſaid Sir *Gre-
gory*, "our eſtate, to be ſure, is a very
"pretty one, and lies in as pleaſant a
"ſpot as one would wiſh to ſee; and a
"charming houſe." "Yes," ſaid my
lady,

lady, "and coach-houſe and ſtables, and "the convenienteſt places for the ſer- "vants that ever were made.—Pray, Sir "*Simon*, come and ſee us, do you, now, "we ſhould take it as a huge favour, if "you would come, and ſpend a few weeks "with us. We ſhall make you vaſtly wel- "come, and pray bring Mr. *Timothy* "with you—He will be a pretty play- "fellow for our *Polly*. I can tell you, Sir "*Simon*, you may have a chance to meet "ſome top company at our houſe; for "when I dined with Lady *Suſan Salaman- "der*, juſt before I left *London*, ſhe vowed "and proteſted ſhe would make a jour- "ney to *Grubb-Hall*; and my dear friend "Lady *Bridget Buzzard* told me, that I "ſhould certainly ſee her every ſummer— "for you muſt know"— Sir *Simon*, who had made ſeveral efforts, in vain, to make her ladyſhip an anſwer, was quite tired of being a hearer, and thus checked her ladyſhip in the midſt of her career—

"Thankee,

" Thankee, thankee, my lady, *Peter* and
" I, mayhap, ſhall pay you a viſit, when
" we make a *tower* through that part of
" the world—*Peter* and I travel every ſum-
" mer to ſee the world—Yo, ho, Sir *Gre-*
" *gory*, what, are you got into the land of
" *Nod*, already?—Ecod, my lady, you muſt
" give him a jog, or he will catch a
" d—m—d cold, I can tell you; for
" ſleeping in the afternoon is a helliſh bad
" cuſtom. It ſtops the pores, and ſpoils
" digeſtion. I know ſomething about the
" body, for I was mighty fond, in my
" younger days, of ſeeing men cut up
" for anatomies. Yo, ho, Sir *Gregory*,—
" faſt as a church, by *Jupiter*—I wiſh my
" huntſman was here, he would ſoon blow
" a *tantivy* through your head, and ſet
" you to rights again—I can tell you that.
" *Tom's* as cute a fellow as ever blowed—
" It makes one as briſk and as clever to
" hear him"—Sir *Gregory*, with theſe re-
peated ſalutations, which were extremely

ſonorous,

ſonorous, ſtarted from his chair, as king *Richard* did from his couch, and cried out in an exſtacy, "Another ſlice of the "haunch—Odſo," continued he, rubbing his eyes, and looking immenſely void of underſtanding—"I aſk pardon, my good "friends, I declare I quite forgot myſelf "—I have been dreaming of my dinner, "and had another feaſt upon the veniſon, "in my ſleep.—When things make an "impreſſion, you know, friend *Jennings*"—"Yes, yes, Sir *Gregory*, a nap is very "common after a full meal, and it is na-"tural to dream of that which gives us "moſt pleaſure when we are awake."—"Ay, ay," replied Sir *Gregory*, "very na-"tural—very natural."

Such were the principal ſubjects of converſation, and ſuch the manner in which they were diſcuſſed—but the principal amuſement which aroſe from the looks and the tones of the *dramatis perſonæ*, muſt be imagined, for it cannot be deſcribed.

I have drawn the outlines—The reader, from his own fancy, muſt finiſh the portraits.

While Mrs. *Mildmay*, and her young folks, were riding home, the converſation naturally turned on the day they had paſſed with Mr. *Jennings*, and his jovial crew.—"Well," ſaid *Harriot*, "of all the "characters I ever met with, Miſs *Grubb* "is certainly the moſt curious. Only "think of ſo ugly a chit's pretending to "give herſelf as many airs as if ſhe was "the fineſt woman in *England!* What a "coquetting little wretch!—I have no "patience with her."—"Poor thing!" ſaid Miſs *Martin*, "but conſider what "education ſhe has had—You ſaw that "Sir *Gregory*, and my lady, too, were "vaſtly fond of their darling, and you "may be ſure they think her a *nonparile*, "to uſe Sir *Gregory's* word."——"La, "ma'am," ſaid the youngeſt Miſs *Martin*, "how heartily Sir *Gregory* ſaluted you,

"when

" when you entered the room!—I thought
" he would have ſhaken you to pieces:
" what a ſtrange creature it is! and as for
" my lady, to be ſure ſhe was his cook-
" maid, for, I believe, you never ſaw a
" a figure ſo truly in the kitchen ſtyle."
" Ay," ſaid *Harriot*, with her uſual vivacity, " ſhe was, indeed, a flaming fi-
" gure: what a pair of coarſe, fiery arms
" ſhe had!"—Theſe lively remarks made them all laugh.—*Harriot* had a ſpirited way of deſcribing awkward characters, and always took delight to paint them in the ſtrongeſt colours.—" And then," continued ſhe, " did ever any body ſee ſuch a
" pair of hubble bubbles, father and ſon?
" A couple of more exquiſitely ſtupid
" animals never breathed. What a con-
" fuſion of ideas in the old knight, and
" what a plentiful lack of wit in
" the young oaf! *Dryden's Cymon* was
" a lively fellow compared to him."——
" No matter for that," ſaid Miſs *Martin*,

archly enough, "you have no reaſon to "be ſo very ſarcaſtical on the young "heir, for he ogled you almoſt all dinner-"time."—"He goggled at me, if you "pleaſe, my dear," ſaid *Harriot*, briſkly, "with his ox-eyes, but, for G—d's ſake, "don't mention ſuch a brute's ogling—"I ſhall never bear the word again."—— "Well, well," ſaid the youngeſt Miſs *Martin*, "you don't know what you may "come to—for my part, I think Lady "*Hubble-bubble's* ſervant will ſound ex-"ceſſively pretty—and, you know, as Sir "*Simon* is very old, you may, by taking "this youth, ſoon arrive to that honour." "Faugh!" cried *Harriot*,"—"name him "not for a huſband, I beſeech you—Ima-"gination ſickens at the thought. I "would ſooner follow Lady ——'s ex-"ample, and run away with my foot-"man."——"Oh, fie, *Harriot*," ſaid Mrs. *Mildmay*, "now you are quite ſcandalous, "indeed—I am very glad we are by our-

"ſelves,

"ſelves, for I would not have our converſa-
"tion over-heard for the world."—"Come,
"come, madam," ſaid *Harriot*, "I ſee,
"by thoſe arch looks of yours, that you
"think very meanly of her ladyſhip, for
"deſcending ſo low for a huſband—If
"you had a coronet in your family, I am
"ſure you would not diſgrace it by ſuch
"a *Plebeian* alliance.—*Harriot* was always happy in tickling the ears of the old ladies ſhe viſited—Mrs. *Mildmay's* predominant paſſion was family-pride, and, by flattering that paſſion, ſhe always found her account. Mrs. *Mildmay* ſimpered at *Harriot's* anſwer, and received the compliment very cordially.——"I think," ſaid ſhe,
"that perſons of quality ſhould be parti-
"cularly cautious how they act; and act,
"in every reſpect, conſiſtently with their
"rank in life—and every woman ſhould
"have pride enough to keep her from
"doing things to degrade her character in
"the eye of the world."—The ſtopping

of the coach put an end to the converſation, before they expected, for they did not think they were ſo near home by half the way—ſo ſwiftly does time paſs when our tongues are employed in chearful chat, and the free interchange of ſentiments.—Though ſurpriſed, however, at coming home ſo ſoon, they were not ſorry, for they all longed to throw off the trappings of ceremony, and ſlide into their undreſſes—In which, thoſe who prefer eaſe to reſtraint, are always moſt happy: and therefore home is the happieſt place.

*Harriot* muſt now appear in a new light.—The following letter ſhe found, with the meſſenger who brought it, when ſhe returned from the above viſit—The manner of its conveyance alarmed her, and the contents confirmed her ſuſpicions.

Dear

Dear *Harriot*, *Hill-Street*.

YOUR father is ſeized with ſo ſevere a fit of the gout, in his ſtomach, that his life is in imminent danger—Dr.—— ſays, it would be cruel to flatter me with the hopes of his recovery; I therefore beg you would make all the haſte you can to me, for the loſs of ſo good a huſband, and the abſence of ſo good a daughter, at the ſame time, would be too much for my ſpirits to bear.—Loſe no time.—

Your affectionate, but
almoſt diſtracted, Mother,

MARTHA AIRY.

*Harriot*, with all her follies and failings, had a great deal of filial ſenſibility, and very ſincerely loved her indulgent parents—On this trying occaſion, therefore, ſhe appeared to the higheſt advantage.—

She loſt no time in order to perform the duties of a daughter. The parting with her agreeable friends was abrupt, but tender—They all felt for her, and, when ſhe ſet out, followed her, with their moiſtened eyes, as long as they could ſee her with any diſtinctneſs.

To part with agreeable friends, after we have been long happy in their converſation, is affecting—The more agreeable their converſation has been, the more ſenſibly we feel its loſs: but when thoſe friends are called away from us, in order to be removed to ſcenes of domeſtic diſtreſs, our concern is doubled at their departure.—We then feel for them as well as for ourſelves.

When *Harriot* arrived in *Hill-Street*, ſhe found her father in ſo dangerous a way, that a ſettled gloom was ſpread over the whole family, and her mother very much indiſpoſed, by the many proofs ſhe had given of her conjugal affection

affection beyond her ſtrength.—The arrival, therefore, of *Harriot* was every way fortunate, for, by the moſt unwearied aſſiduity, ſhe aſſiſted the former in his very feeble condition, and, by a thouſand little attentions, contributed to alleviate the diſquietudes of the latter.—In a few days they had the pleaſure to hear he was out of danger, but were afraid to flatter themſelves that he would be reſtored to perfect health——He grew ſtronger and more hearty for ſeveral days, but on a ſlight attack of the ſame diſorder ſoon afterwards, it was the unanimous opinion of the phyſicians who attended him, that a journey to *Bath* was the only thing in his favour.—To *Bath* therefore they went, as ſoon as Mr. *Airy* could bear the motion of a coach, to which he always had a great averſion—To *Bath* they went, but to no purpoſe; for, in a few weeks after their arrival there, he died, happily releaſed from all his pains.

The

The final ſcene was mute—mournful—ſolemn.—The reader of *feeling* will be properly moved with theſe few words: and the moſt pathetic deſcription of ſuch a ſcene, would be thrown away on the reader who has none.

No man ever died more regretted by his relations, or more lamented by his friends—No man acquitted himſelf, in public and in private life, with more honour and propriety.—In the performance of his duties to God, his neighbour, and himſelf, he was rigidly exact. In his domeſtic connexions, as a huſband, father, maſter, friend, and acquaintance, he preſerved ſuch a conſiſtency of character, that every body, who knew him, loved him, and revered him—His manners were pleaſing, and his morals pure. From a natural felicity of diſpoſition, he was equal and compoſed under the moſt mortifying diſappointments; and, by that diſpoſition, was enabled to ſuſtain the ſevereſt diſ-

orders

orders with uncommon reſignation. How amiable! how enviable is ſuch a character! To make us more happy, it is alſo imitable. We cannot command bright talents, and extenſive capacities, but we may make thoſe we have uſeful to ourſelves, and to others——We cannot command the gifts of fortune, but we may deſerve them; we cannot all be *great*, but every body may be *good*.

With ſuch reflections as theſe, it is very much in our power to make any ſtation in life happy, and, without them, there can be no felicity in the higheſt. To no particular ſtation is happineſs confined.

Condition, circumſtance is not the thing;
Bliſs is the ſame, in ſubject, or in king—
. . . . . .
Some are, and muſt be, greater than the reſt,
More rich, more wiſe, but who infers from thence
That ſuch are happier, ſhocks all common ſenſe.

POPE.

*END of the* FIFTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS

# MEMOIRS

OF

# ACOQUET.

## BOOK VI.

# MEMOIRS
OF
# A COQUET.

## BOOK VI.

MRS. *Airy*, and *Harriot*, after having performed the laſt duties, left a place which only filled them with the moſt melancholy ideas, and returned to *Hill-Street*, where they received the condolance of their friends; and, after what I have ſaid of Mr. *Airy*, I need

I need not add, that their condolance was ſincere.

They came with great humanity, and greatly alleviated the diſtreſs Mrs. *Airy* felt at the loſs of ſo indulgent a huſband.—This part of the volume will make no impreſſion but on thoſe who have not been in ſimilar ſituations; they will turn over the page in a hurry, and cry, "What melancholy ſtuff is all "this!—Every body knows that death in "a family is always a dull affair."

Mrs. *Airy*, for ſeveral weeks, was ſo affected with the death of Mr. *Airy*, and the diſorders ſhe had acquired before that unhappy event, that *Harriot*, and every body about her, did not imagine ſhe would recover from the ſhock.—Her ſpirits were quite broken, her health very much impaired, ſhe loſt her appetite, and had no reſt.—It requires a great deal of philoſophy to bear the loſs of our relations, when we have lived many years together,

in

in harmony and love, with compoſure and reſignation.—The firſt ſeparation, though in caſes where it would be cruel to wiſh to ſee them linger among us, is a blow we muſt, if we have any ſenſibility, feel; and nothing can deaden the force of that blow, but time.

The death of Mr. *Airy* affected his family in many ſhapes. Mrs. *Airy*, on a review of his affairs, finding it abſolutely neceſſary to change her way of living, diſcharged all her ſervants, except one maid, and hired a ſmall houſe in a private part of the town.—This alteration in her mother's circumſtances, was a blow which *Harriot* never expected, and it hurt her extremely: ſhe had been accuſtomed to affluence from her cradle, and could not think of moving in a narrow circle, without very mortifying reflections.—Vanity, the love of ſhow, a paſſion for admiration, had ever occaſioned all the diſappointments ſhe met with in her con-

connections with her own, and the other ſex; and were now the greateſt diſturbers of her repoſe.——Her conſequence was leſſened: ſhe felt herſelf little when her old companions came to viſit her, and propoſed parties of pleaſure which ſhe could not partake of with her uſual ſpirit.—And though ſhe endeavoured, by the ſmartneſs of her dreſs, and the vivacity of her converſation, to maintain her uſual appearance in the eye of the world, (the dread of which drives ſo many fools to ridiculous inconveniencies) and *keep the beſt company in town*, ſhe was often reduced to the moſt contemptible ſhifts at home, to ſupport that appearance, and to keep that company which deſpiſed her for throwing herſelf into a rank unſuitable to her fortune.

One of Mrs. *Airy's* near neighbours was a Mrs. *Maitland*; a widow, who had, like her, lived in more proſperous days; and, like her, had been obliged to draw

her

her affairs into a narrow compaſs. Mr. *Maitland* had a lucrative poſt; but, as he had not the leaſt notion of œconomy, his wife had nothing to truſt to, but her jointure, when he died. With that, indeed, ſhe was ſufficiently ſupplied with the decencies, and, with them, had too ſtrong an underſtanding to ſigh after the delicacies, of life, which ſhe had profuſely enjoyed. To accommodate one's ſelf to every ſtation in life, and to make that ſtation agreeable, is true philoſophy.

This kind of philoſophy was, to *Harriot*, extremely unpalatable, and ſhe fretted not a little, to think that ſhe could not ſhine away, at balls and aſſemblies, with the ſpirit ſhe had been uſed to appear with. She had enjoyed more pleaſure, from the indulgence of her parents, than moſt girls in her ſtyle of life; and therefore ſhe could not, with any tranquillity, reconcile herſelf to her preſent condition, ſo different, in all reſpects.

Mrs. *Maitland* was a very companionable woman: and, as ſhe had ſeen a great deal of the gay world, with a ſtrong turn for obſervation, was extremely entertaining.—From a ſuitableneſs in age, taſte, ſentiment, and circumſtances, the acquaintance between theſe two ladies ſoon grew into an intimacy, and they were never ſo happy, as when they paſſed a ſocial evening together—quite in an unformal family way.—Theſe quiet evenings, however, were, to *Harriot*, ſhocking; for though, ſhe loved her mother dearly, ſhe could not bear to be ſhut up in a box, only to hear a couple of old ladies tell old ſtories, and mournfully moralize on the follies of the age.—What horrid converſation for the ears of a vain girl, whoſe whole delight conſiſted, in ſeeing, and being ſeen!

*Harriot*, however, did not long remain in this hum-drum way, ſo diſmal to a coquet. A ſcene, totally unexpected, revived her ſpirits, and turned her thoughts

quite

quite into a new channel.—As ſhe was ſauntering, in a fine evening, in the *Park*, with ſome of her young female neighbours, they were joined by the celebrated Miſs *Freelove*, who was acquainted with two of them. — Miſs *Freelove*, with a large independent fortune, for ſhe had no relations to controul her, was a ſtriking figure, wherever ſhe appeared, by the elegance of her dreſs, and the dignity of her deportment.—She was tall, and well-made, and though nobody could call her a *beauty*, every body allowed, at firſt ſight, that ſhe was a *grace*. She was uncommonly lively, high-ſpirited, and fond of pleaſure: in the height of every faſhion, and at the head of every frolic—rather looſe in her principles, and licentious in her conduct: above the world, and regardleſs of its cenſures—She gave ſuppers to young fellows, laughed loud at certain jokes, toaſted arch ſentiments with ſignificant looks, and turned every

word one way—called every man by his ſurname, and encouraged all *diſcreet* familiarities—ſuch was Miſs *Freelove*, a girl after *Harriot's* own heart—and between them, therefore, an acquaintance ſoon commenced to their mutual ſatisfaction—for *Harriot* readily entered into all her ſchemes, becauſe ſhe knew ſhe ſhould have many opportunities of exerting her coquetting powers, which ſhe longed to employ, as ſhe led a gloomy life, the irkſomeneſs of which ſhe was unable to ſupport: her indulgent mother gratified her, as far as ſhe could, conſiſtent with prudence, in all her deſires, and allowed her as much as ſhe could afford, to keep up a conſequence with her companions; but as moſt of her companions were in a far higher ſtyle of life than herſelf, ſhe was often reduced to very diſagreeable embaraſſments, in order to ſupport the character ſhe aſſumed—To make a ſhift, in order to make a ſhow, is truly ridiculous; and

thoſe who pinch themſelves at home, in order to puff away abroad, take a great deal of pains to be laughed at, and deſerve the contempt with which they are treated by their ſuperiors.

With Miſs *Freelove*, *Harriot* forgot all her paſt uneaſineſs, and grew, every day, more and more averſe to home and her mother, whom ſhe began to treat with a familiarity not conſiſtent with the duty of a daughter, who, from that mother, received every thing ſhe poſſeſſed.—There is certainly nothing ſo pernicious as an imprudent connection. To make friendſhips prudent, not to ſay laſting, there ſhould be a parity of circumſtances as well as diſpoſitions—The largeneſs of Miſs *Freelove's* fortune enabled her to enjoy all the expenſive pleaſures of the town, from which *Harriot*, by the narrowneſs of her own income, was excluded. By this new connection *Harriot*, therefore, was very much em-

baraſſed, and was perpetually reduced to the mortifying neceſſity of refuſing to accompany her friend to the places, of all others, the moſt agreeable to her taſte.—A walk in the *Park*, a ride to *Ranelagh*, in Summer, with, now and then, an evening in a ſide-box, in winter, were all the diverſions ſhe could pretend to—This connection, therefore, made her very uneaſy, and turned her ſo much againſt her mother, that, from the moſt obliging and affectionate daughter, ſhe became quite a different creature. Mrs. *Airy*, with the greateſt concern, ſaw the alteration, and the repeated proofs ſhe every day received of the alienation of her daughter's affections, threw her into a melancholy way, from which ſhe was, in a ſhort time, releaſed.—*Harriot*, a-while, regretted the loſs of her mother with ſincerity, for ſhe had not a bad heart, but the ſatisfaction ſhe felt at being independent, and having her

little

little fortune in her own power, ſoon diſſipated her filial ſorrow; ſhe then ſet her wits to work to make the beſt appearance ſhe could with it; and, as ſoon as the compliments to decency were paid, ſallied forth, in all the pride of dreſs, to employ her charms to the beſt advantage.

The friendſhip between Miſs *Freelove* and *Harriot*, was ardent while it laſted; but it did not continue long—Violent friendſhips are never permanent; and female friendſhip, the leaſt durable of any. When *Harriot*, by being an independant, though not ſo rich as Miſs *Freelove*, aſſumed a more ſpirited behaviour, and drew more men after her, ſhe began to look upon her with the eyes of a rival, and grew jealous of her attractions—for *Harriot* had many admirers, though ſhe never fixed a lover—At a ſupper, which Miſs *Freelove* gave one night, to a ſelect party, when Sir *Charles Sprightly*

was preſent, *Harriot* and Sir *Charles* were ſo very particular to each other the whole evening, that Miſs *Freelove* was extremely alarmed at the familiarity of their behaviour; for ſhe had looked upon Sir *Charles* as a man totally attached to herſelf, and could not, therefore, but be very much diſconcerted at his aſſiduities and attentions to her friend—From this evening the ardor of their friendſhip abated, and the enterviews between them became formal and ceremonious—They knocked at each other's door, at long intervals, with the utmoſt politeneſs, but, with equal cordiality, ordered themſelves to be denied. This way of viſiting is perfectly polite, and the moſt compendious method imaginable—There is, indeed, no ſuch thing as keeping company without it: for how would it be poſſible for a lady, happy in two or three hundred friends, to pay her viſits with punctuality, if thoſe friends were ſo cruel as to receive her?—

The

The two females I hinted at, when Miſs *Freelove* joined *Harriot* and her party, were two very plain, decent girls, whom *Harriot* made uſe of as foils to ſet her off in public places—They were perfectly fitted for that purpoſe; for they gave no offence by their beauty. They were *characters* with whom *Harriot* diverted herſelf extremely; and, indeed, they ſeldom went out but their appearance and behaviour drew attention, and repelled admiration.—They were ſiſters; but very whimſically oppoſite to each other in make, mien, mind, and manners.—Miſs *Urania Clitherow* was of a large gigantic ſize; limbed like an elephant, and as void of agility as that animal. All the parts of her body were clumſily put together, and ſhe had not the leaſt notion, by throwing on her cloaths with an air, or by attending to her carriage, to look, or move, to any advantage: her ſiſter, Miſs *Sophy*, was *tout-au-contraire*, a little, four-foot-five, flippant

ſlippant creature, full of fire, fond of dreſs, and as ſhe was rather genteely made, and had a good taſte, would have looked very well out of her ſiſter's ſight; but when they were in company together, no face could bear the contraſt. — The great Miſs *Clitherow* was, to make herſelf a more ſtriking character, a female pedant, and had ſtudied ſo much the writings of the *penſioned*——, that ſhe could not deſcribe the commoneſt occurrence, or deliver her thoughts on the moſt triffling ſubject, without a *horrible hard* word. — A clear day was *tranſpicuous*, and when the ſky was overcaſt, it was *obnubilated:* ſhe never made an approach to any object, but it was an *approximation*; and when ſhe was tired of walking, wiſhed for *retroceſſion*. — In ſuch words did ſhe expreſs herſelf; and, without any more of the ſame kind at preſent, the reader will have a compleat idea of Miſs *Clitherow's* pompoſity.—Miſs *Sophy* was the prettieſt little thing you ever ſaw,

ſaw, the moſt unpompous chatterer in the world; for ſhe minced all her words in ſo affected a manner, that you could not, without attending cloſely, always know what language ſhe made uſe of. — The converſation, therefore, of the two ſiſters, and they both loved it, was a comic entertainment to thoſe who have a taſte for humour.

I have ſaid that Miſs *Clitherow* was a female pedant, and loved hard words, but I did not ſay ſhe was a fool. She was, indeed, a very ſenſible woman, read all the new books of reputation that were publiſhed, and made many judicious obſervations on the contents of them. I have ſaid, that the youngeſt *Clitherow* was pert and unpompous, and loved to hear herſelf chatter: but I did not ſay ſhe talked nonſenſe: ſhe had not the ſolidity of her ſiſter, but more vivacity, and ſaid a great many ſmart things — By their oppoſite talents for converſation, there-

fore,

fore, they made an agreeable variety, and, for their companionable qualifications, not their perſonal accompliſhments, their company was very much courted. *Harriot* uſed them in public places as foils, as I have ſaid before, to her perſon, but had ſenſe enough to have a high reliſh for their converſation in private, whenever they formed a *trio* together. As they were all three ſentimental girls, and had all a taſte for polite literature, they never wanted ſubjects to chat upon, at thoſe times, on which they communicated each other's opinions with the utmoſt freedom and unreſerve; and by that free unreſtrained manner of communication, their minds were opened, enlarged and improved.—The *Clitherows* had not the leaſt notion of coquetry; they were totally diſcreet in their conduct, and delicate in their ſenſations: *Harriot's* ideas of diſcretion and delicacy were not leſs correct; but the misfortune was, whenever

ever a man came in her way, all thoſe ideas were routed, and the *coquet* took full poſſeſſion of her. Though always diſappointed in her amours, ſhe always had what ſhe called love-affairs upon her hands; and, like Sir *Charles Grandiſon*, was often entangled by them.—She was never contented without a brace of danglers, at leaſt, after her, wherever ſhe went, to flutter about her and feed her with flattery, and generally loſt them both, by the impropriety of her behaviour to them. According to her own account, ſhe has been twenty times at the brink of matrimony; but I queſtion whether ſhe ever had a ſerious declaration made to her on that intereſting ſubject in her life. She attracted hundreds by the allurements of her perſon, but before any of thoſe, whom ſhe had attracted, had been an hour in her company, ſhe repelled them ſo effectually, that they were ever after proof againſt her magnetic powers.—

Thus

Thus was ſhe conſtantly making cages for her lovers, and chacing them away from her, inſtead of ſpreading nets to ſecure them: and thus coquets, by diſcovering their deſigns too openly, defeat them.

The coquets of this intriguing age, who attempt to take a man by ſtorm, are rarely ſucceſsful in their *manœuvres:* ſapping is the ſureſt method: and we every day ſee the ſtouteſt heroes ſubdued by the ſecret artifices of the fair ſex, who would ſtand firm and intrepid againſt a whole regiment of the moſt formidable beauties in *England*, which ſhould endeavour to ſurprize them by a *coup de main.*

*Harriot* and the *Clitherows* often chatted of love-matters, as all girls do when they are ſnug by themſelves; ſuch ſubjects are always animating, intereſting and inexhauſtible. They are everlaſting topics to talk upon; for, as long as there are men in the world, women will find employment for their

their thoughts and their tongues, if for nothing elſe.

One morning when the three friends were chatting together, Miſs *Clitherow* aſked *Harriot* to whom ſhe would give the preference for a huſband, the man who had given indubitable proofs of his regard for her, but for whom ſhe could not entertain a favourable opinion herſelf, or the man for whom ſhe herſelf had a particular eſteem, but who, ſhe knew, from the whole turn of his behaviour, beheld her with the eyes of indifference?—The queſtion was curious, and not eaſily to be determined.—*Harriot*, without the leaſt heſitation, declared for the man whom ſhe herſelf loved—not doubting but ſhe could render herſelf amiable to the moſt obdurate huſband: but if once, ſhe ſaid, ſhe had taken an averſion to a man, all the aſſiduities and ſtudious endeavours of that man could never remove them—"My ſentiments on this ſubject," ſaid Miſs

Miſs *Clitherow*, "do not *cohere* with "yours—a woman has a better chance "for connubial felicity, with a man to "whom ſhe knows ſhe is an object of "admiration, than with him who is only "led by lucrative views to fix the indiſ-"ſoluble knot.—By the conſtant aſſidui-"ties of the huſband, who was not the "object of my choice, I think I ſhould, "by time, be cured of my indifference "for him, but could never hope to ren-"der *him* fond who was firmly attached "to another woman—I ſhould never ex-"pect any felicity from ſuch an al-"liance."—"No, nor I neither, I am ſure," ſaid her ſiſter—"'Tis a dangerous expe-"riment, indeed, *Harriot*; and if you per-"ſiſt in that notion of yours, you may "throw yourſelf away upon a worthleſs "fellow, to pleaſe your eye; who, you "may depend upon it, will make you "heartily repent of your injudicious "choice.—No, no, *Harriot*, never pleaſe

you

" your eyes to plague your heart. Take " a man when you can catch him, who, " according to the uniformity of his con- " duct, you have reaſon to believe is ſin- " cerely in love with you, and, if you are " not happy with him afterwards, it will, " in a great meaſure, be your own fault." " Well, well," ſaid *Harriot*, " there is no " arguing againſt two opponents at once, " and ſo I bid you good morning; only " pray remember, that though I am ſi- " lenced, I am not convinced."—" You " will think as we do," ſaid Miſs *Clitherow*, " when you have digeſted the ſub- " ject in your mind—but don't forget to " come in the afternoon, for, you know, " I expect Miſs *Mills*, who is juſt arrived " from *Italy*, and more friends of yours." " Very well," replied *Harriot*, " I will " certainly remember to come—and ſo, " adieu."

*Harriot* was faithful to her appointment in the afternoon, and was highly enter-

tained with it. She made a ſketch of ſome of the characters, when ſhe returned to her lodgings; and, from her manuſcript, the following dialogue is tranſcribed:—

*Small talk at Miſs* Clitherow's.

Miſs *Clitherow.* Well, ladies, have you ſeen the Prince of *Wales?* He grows moſt royally, I hear, and promiſes to be the very portraiture of his illuſtrious ſire.—

Mrs. *Snap.* So much the better; for I am ſure if he had been like his ——, he would have been a frightful creature.

Miſs *Clitherow.* O fie! Mrs. *Snap*, you are too diſreſpectfully ſarcaſtical. Her—, tho' not a *Venus*, has a thouſand winning graces, and alluring accompliſhments, which ſufficiently make amends for the want of *cytherean* charms.—Beauty is a very periſhable commodity, Mrs. *Snap.*

Mrs. *Snap.* Ay, madam, ſo people talk who never knew what beauty was; but

but I think beauty a fine thing, and by no means ſo contemptible an ornament.

Mr. *Tattle.* Now you talk of ornament, ma'am, give me leave to admire the extreme pretty fancy of your flounces; I ſwear they are delicately conceived, and moſt happily executed—I never ſaw any thing ſo exquiſitely airy and *degagée* in my life.

Mrs. *Snap.* Oh, ſir, you beſtow more compliments upon them than they deſerve—but you are always ſo exceſſively polite—

Mr. *Tattle.* Not at all too much, madam, whenever I am admiring *your* things; for, I vow, I think you have a prodigious genteel taſte in dreſs.

Mr. *Pallet.* (*aſide to Tattle*) Well done, *Tattle*, you have put the old crab into a good humour again: I began to be in pain for Miſs *Clitherow's* cap.

Miſs *Mills.* Pray, Mr. *Pallet*, have you heard from *Rome*, lately?

Mr. *Pallet.* No, ma'am, but the laſt time I heard, our friends were all well there.

Miſs *Mills.* I am extremely glad to hear ſo good an account of them. I long to be with them again, for there is no *virtû* in *England.*

Mrs. *Snap.* No virtue in *England*, madam?—I think, madam, you pay us a very bad compliment. I believe, madam, we have full as much virtue as the *Italian* trollops.

Miſs *Mills.* My dear Mrs. *Snap*, you totally miſtake my meaning—for G—d's ſake don't put yourſelf into ſuch a heat—I don't trouble my head about virtue, and wiſh you would look into a dictionary another time, before you fly out ſo abſurdly —*(aſide to Pallet)* Did you ever hear any thing ſo barbarous?—What exquiſite ignorance!—Pray, Mrs. *Brown*, was you ſo kind as to think of me about thoſe pictures you promiſed to procure a view of

for

for me?—I am told Mrs. *Friendly* has a capital collection.

Mrs. *Brown.* I called on Mrs. *Friendly* this morning, me'em, and ſhe will be very glad of your company whenever it is moſt convenient.—As you are lately arrived from a place of which ſhe has a very high opinion, from what ſhe has read and heard of it, ſhe will, I am ſure, have a ſtill higher one, when ſhe has been entertained with your account of it. The morning will be moſt agreeable, I believe.

Miſs *Mills.* You are extremely obliging, madam, and I will take the firſt opportunity, and your company, at the ſame time, will be an additional pleaſure.—I am very glad you mention the morning, for I have ſo many engagements in the afternoon, that I have not time to be civil to half my friends. Did I tell you, *Clitherow*, what a joyous interview I had laſt week at the play, with one of my fellow-travellers over the *Alps?* I never was

in higher ſpirits in my life, and, I believe, the box we ſat in was never ſo merrily filled ſince it was built—He is, perhaps, one of the moſt extraordinary fellows you ever met with, and the beſt natured creature in the univerſe. He is juſt arrived to ſettle ſome buſineſs in *England*, and intends to return as ſoon as he has finiſhed it.—If you will favour me with your company next week, I will contrive to fix him for that day, and, I dare ſay, you will be exceſſively entertained with his *converſatione*.

Miſs *Clitherow*. Pray do, for I love characters dearly, that have any originality in them—They are quite a banquet to me—and, by what you ſay, I doubt not but that I ſhall be exhilerated with your friend's efforts, to make himſelf agreeable—You may depend upon my waiting on you next week.

Miſs *Mills*. You are vaſtly obliging, my dear——Bleſs me! 'tis almoſt nine o'clock, and I have fifteen viſits to make before

before I go home—So, my dear Miſs *Clitherows*, adieu. *Pallet*, you know when to find me at home—Come ſoon, you careleſs creature—I have ſomething curious to exhibit, too good for the *ſociety*—You ſhall have it, if you will, at *your* room———*Tattle*, your ſervant.———

*All.* Ha—ha—ha———he—he—he———ho—ho—ho.—

Miſs *Clitherow.* Well, ladies, don't you think Miſs *Mills* is prodigiouſly improved by her journey over the *Alps?*

Mrs. *Snap.* Improved!—do you call it?—I never ſaw ſuch a conceited wretch in my life—If this is to ſee foreign parts, I think girls had better ſtay at home, and ſee their own country———*England* has curioſities enough for me—I don't want to go galloping about.—What is ſhe the better for her *taſte*, and ſuch fiddle-faddle ſtuff?—ſhe will never get a huſband the ſooner for all the trincums ſhe has got.—Pray,

is not this fooliſh girl the ſame who made ſuch a noiſe at *Bath* ſome years ago?

Miſs *Clitherow.* The very ſame, madam; and, notwithſtanding all the foreign airs, and *Italian* graces, which you ſurvey with ſo much diſguſt and deteſtation, ſhe has ſtrong intellectual powers, and a vivacious imagination; and I am of opinion, that, in a private interview, you would not, with ſo much acebrity, reprehend the airineſs of her behaviour. In a mixed company, I confeſs ſhe appears not in ſo advantageous a light—Her paſſion for *Italy* eclipſes thoſe beauties of her mind which would, otherwiſe, ſhine forth with great luſtre—for her genius is prolific, and her knowledge extenſive—But ſhe degrades herſelf too much by affecting to be a connoiſſeur in painting, of which ſhe is a warm admirer, but a ſuperficial judge.

Mrs. *Brown.* I heard, t'other day, that ſhe was to be marrried to a very agreeable man, with a large fortune.

Mrs.

Mrs. *Snap.* Ay, madam, ſo we all heard; but that ſame agreeable man has thought better of it than to throw himſelf away upon ſuch a conceited creature—You may ſay what you will of her ſenſe; but a girl, who goes about to all public places, and makes herſelf a ſtanding jeſt every where, gives no proofs of it—I don't know what ſenſe ſhe has, but I am ſure ſhe wants common-ſenſe, and that's more uſeful to go through life with than all the taſte and ſuch trumpery in the world. Taſte!—I am ſick of the word taſte—People only make themſelves ridiculous by it—Thank God, I have no taſte myſelf, and, if I thought *my* girls had any, I would ſoon drive it out of them if I could.—I don't wonder at Mr. *Fairchild's* leaving ſuch a lump of affectation in the lurch: I only wonder he could ever think of making love to her.

*Tattle.*

*Tattle.* Well ſaid, Mrs. *Snap*,—Egad, you have peppered her off, pretty handſomely; but ſee what it is to be a beauty.

*All.* A beauty!—

*Tattle.* Why there now—I knew I ſhould have you all upon my back—Egad, that is excellent—A beauty!—no to be ſure—who would ever have thought of that?—But I love dearly the great good-nature and humanity of you ladies, for your own ſex—For, egad, you never ſpare one another, I *will* venture to ſay that of the beſt.—

Miſs *Clitherow.* Come, come, Mr. *Tattle*, you had better be quiet, *we ſhall be too many for you.*—

Here the manuſcript breaks off abruptly—but there is enough of the converſation that afternoon preſented, to give the reader a ſpecimen of the chit-chat, with which *Harriot* was amuſed; during the circulation of which, ſhe had herſelf, it may

may be imagined, no contemptible ſhare, though ſhe has not recorded her own remarks—Thoſe, perhaps, ſhe reſerved as a ſupplement to the above written dialogue; but as that dialogue was left unfiniſhed, the ſupplement muſt, conſequently, be wanting.

Miſs *Freelove* had a brother in the guards, whoſe perſon and addreſs rendered him of conſequence in the eyes of *Harriot*, and ſhe accordingly played off all her charms to make a conqueſt of his heart.—The attempt was natural, but ſhe knew nothing of her man. Col. *Freelove* had ſeen too much of the world, and had been too much hackneyed in the ways of women, to be coquetted out of his ſenſes—Her languiſhing looks, ſtudied airs, and affected attitudes, were all thrown away upon him; he laughed, he talked, he romped—but gave not the leaſt room to make her expect more regular advances. She flattered herſelf,

however,

however, that he rather *approximated*, as Miſs *Clitherow* would ſay, and therefore, in order to accelerate his progreſs, encouraged a thouſand freedoms and familiarities, which no prudent woman would have permitted, and, by the indulgence of thoſe liberties, defeated her own deſigns; for, from that time, he held her extremely cheap, and began to conceive hopes that he might have her on his own terms. Blinded by the love of admiration, and truſting too much to her attracting powers, ſhe was ſo very unguarded in her behaviour in public with the Colonel, that ſhe became ſoon not only the talk, but the joke, of the town. *Harriot*, however, was guilty of no criminal actions—Her virtue was unimpeached, but her reputation was ſlightly ſpoken of. Had ſhe been a vicious girl, the temptations which ſhe frequently met with would have totally ruined her character—But the pleaſure of being admired by the

whole

whole ſex, prevented her from fixing upon one man, and that roving temper ſaved her from many a ſcrape. A prude would have been ruined, over and over, with half her temptations to encounter.

*Harriot* finding, luckily, a new object to engage her attention, quitted the colonel, when ſhe found ſhe could make nothing of him, and turned her eyes upon a couſin of the *Clitherows*, a Mr. *Clutterbuck*, juſt come from *Cambridge*. He was a ſprightly young fellow, tolerably handſome, but ſo full of academical affectation, that the coxcomb appeared in every word he uttered. He had taken prieſts orders the week before, and his viſit to *London* was to make intereſt for a vacant lectureſhip; for, as he was ſtrongly addicted to pleaſure, and the elegancies of life, he choſe to reſide in the capital, in the midſt of them, though he had very little hopes of being able to gratify his taſte.—

taſte.—He had a ſmall fortune, with which he contrived, by œconomy, to lead a very gay life, and, in his manners, ſeemed to think a buck a higher character than a biſhop. He was quite ſtruck, one afternoon, with *Harriot*, in a viſit at his couſin's, and made ſo many fine ſpeeches to her on her underſtanding—a certain bait to the ſillieſt women—that *Harriot* could not reſiſt the flattering compliments, but ſwallowed them with a high reliſh—No body is proof againſt artful adulation, though many are ſhocked at it, when it is too apparent.

*Harriot*, for a-while, ſtuck cloſe to young *Clutterbuck*, and plumed herſelf, not a little, on the impreſſion ſhe had made on him, not doubting but that he thought her by much the moſt agreeable creature he had ever converſed with.—Her eyes and her tongue had, in her opinion, been active to ſome purpoſe; and ſhe daily expected, with an impatience peculiar to

girls

girls of her caſt, a declaration of his paſſion. Day followed day, but not a ſyllable, beyond the common civilities of converſation, iſſued from his lips—The truth was, he looked upon her as a very pretty play-thing—and, in that light, ſhe was generally conſidered—but had too much of the coquet himſelf, to fix his affections on a ſingle object.—*Harriot*, finding him very ſlow in his motions, and extremely loth to come to the point, imagined that, by encouraging the addreſſes of another, ſhe ſhould drive him to make ſerious propoſals—But all her attempts to drive him were in vain—No propoſals came—She wondered they did not, and could not reconcile his delay, in this reſpect, with the reſt of his behaviour, which rather bordered upon the rapturous, whenever ſhe was in his company.—But *Harriot* forgot, in the ardor of the chace, that her character was now ſo thoroughly known, from one end of the

town to the other, that every man ſingled her out as a proper perſon to trifle away an hour or two with, when they had nothing of more conſequence to take up their thoughts—From year to year, however, ſhe went on in purſuit of what ſhe could never obtain—a huſband—for who would think of *ſettling* with her who behaved with equal freedom to every man ſhe met with, and diſcovered, by every turn of her eyes, and every movement ſhe made, that the love of admiration was her ruling paſſion?—Whenever that is the paſſion, no man can be ſure of a domeſtic companion—For where it is ſtrongly predominant before marriage, it is rarely weakened afterwards: and who would chuſe to be tied to a wife, for the entertainment of the public?—He who could love ſuch a woman, is, I own, of a more liberal way of thinking; for I am ſo narrow as to ſuppoſe, that there can be no felicity in the marriage ſtate, where the

parties

parties contracted are not wholly attached to each other—and ſtrike out all their happineſs at home.

That there are many *Harriots* in this gay metropolis, (and where, indeed, is the city without them?) nobody, who reads theſe memoirs, will deny—that all girls, who behave like her, ſhould meet with diſappointments, diſquietudes, and vexations, peculiar to her ſex, nobody will wonder.—Diſappointment is always the conſequence of indiſcretion; and they who lead a life of folly, muſt expect to finiſh that life with diſquietude.—A youth of vanity is ever an introduction to an age of vexation.——Theſe are diſagreeable truths to thoſe for whom they are here written; but they are, nevertheleſs, truths which might be, if attended to, uſeful to thoſe who deſpiſe them.—

She who, when ſhe comes to the laſt pages of this volume, throws it away with contempt, and wonders what the author

means by the ſolemnity of his concluſion, is a *Harriot* in her heart—Of *her* approbation I can have no hopes; but in order to convince her of the juſtneſs of my aſſertions, as examples are always more efficacious than precepts, I only wiſh ſhe would let me introduce her to the heroine of theſe ſheets, in her retirement from the world.—An old coquet in retirement is, perhaps, the moſt unhappy being to be imagined.—She cannot review her paſt life with any ſatisfaction; ſhe envies every girl ſhe ſees too much to enjoy the preſent, and the natural levity of her diſpoſition prevents her from receiving any comfort from future, expectations.—In this miſerable ſtate *Harriot* languiſhes out the winter of life in obſcurity, for ſhe cannot bear thoſe ſcenes in which ſhe can no longer excite the leaſt attention; and the recollection of the ill uſe ſhe made of her vernal years, is a perpetual torment.—By indulging the moſt mortifying ideas, and

dwelling

dwelling on the moſt gloomy reflections, her mind and her body are both impaired: and ſhe who was only the object of ridicule and contempt, now deſerves the higheſt compaſſion;—for, with a good heart, and a cultivated underſtanding, ſuperior to thouſands of her ſex, ſhe, though guilty of a thouſand follies, committed no crimes; and tho' ſhe was often indiſcreet, abhorred vice.—She loſt her character, but ſhe preſerved her virtue.

How much happier would the gay females of this age be, and to how much more advantage would they appear in the eyes of thoſe whom they wiſh to attract, if, when they are dreſſing for a rout, they would ſometimes condeſcend to think on their reputation!

*FINIS.*

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